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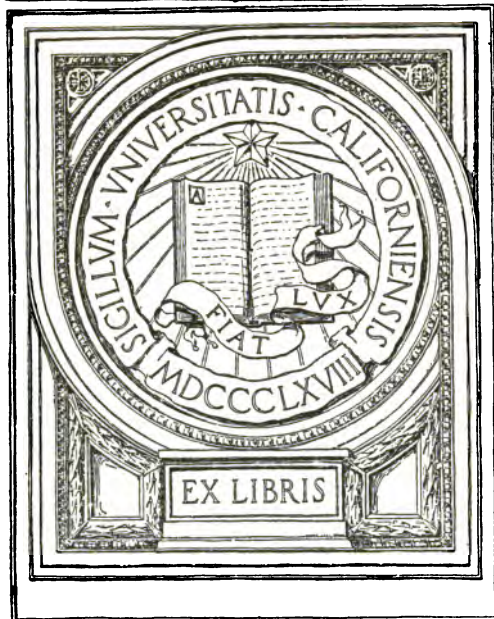


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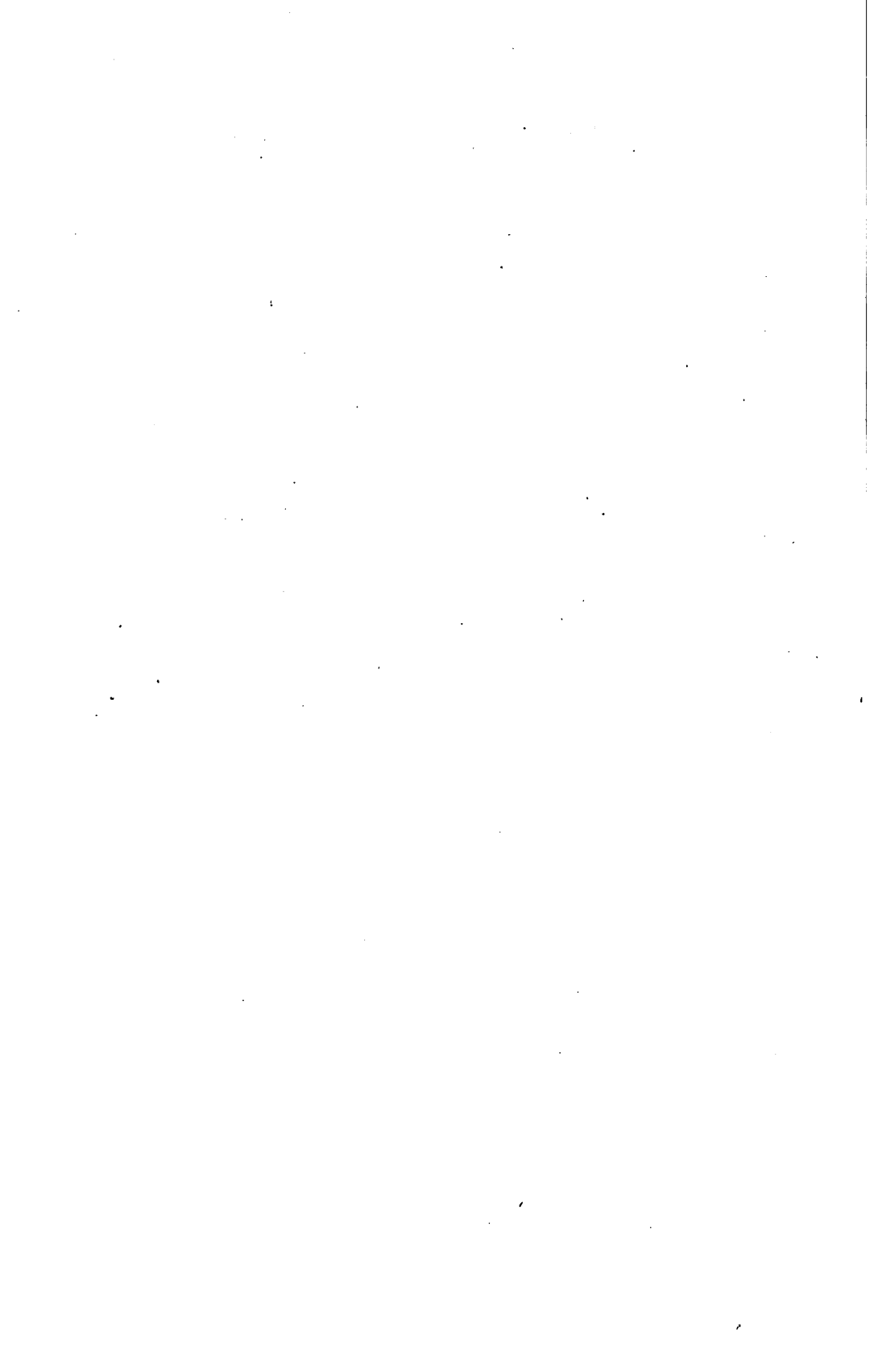


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Yours in Christ
Anna L. McFadyen.

STORIES FROM THE LIFE
OF
THE WONDERFUL.

BY
MRS. NINA L. MCFADYEN.

Author of "Mettie's Partners."

LOS ANGELES, S. CAL.:

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR, 248 HAMILTON STREET.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

FRONTISPIECE. Page	-	-	-	-	2
PREFACE. Pp.	-	-	-	-	9-16

CHAPTER 1.

Introduction. Conversation of two priests. The Prophet on the banks of the Jordan. His manner of life and preaching. The Lamb of God. Baptism. A little white cloud. A voice. Jesus. His infancy. The Jewish nation. Sighing for deliverance. Joseph and Mary. Nazareth. Boyhood of Jesus. His religious training. Mary's musings. Pp. - - - - 17-25.

CHAPTER II.

The wilderness. A new life. The sins of the world. The three temptations. The ministry of angels. John the Baptizer and his disciples. A little talk with Jesus. Telling it abroad. A wedding at Cana. No wine. The best wine. Pp. - - - - 26-34.

CHAPTER III.

A Jewish feast. Going to Jerusalem. The Temple and the sacrifices. Jesus drives out the buyers and sellers. Galilee. Jacob's well. The living water. "A Prophet among us." Again at Cana. The nobleman. An only son. "Thy son liveth." Great joy. Pp. 35-42.

CHAPTER IV.

At Nazareth. Hatred of the people. His first disciples. Love. Jesus walks by the sea. He preaches from a boat. The draught of fishes. Peter's confession. Healed of a fever. A throng at the door. The sufferers healed. Praise. Alone with God. Pp. - - 43-49.

CHAPTER V.

The lepers. One poor man. The Pool of Bethesda. "Wilt thou be made whole?" The Sabbath Day. Unwillingness to receive Jesus. The home at Bethany. The Garden of Gethsemane. The sermon on the Mount. Similarity. Contrast. Prayer. Light and Salt. The Centurion's great faith. Pp. - - - 50-59.

CHAPTER VI.

A house in Nain. A widow. Her letter. The return of her only son. His sickness and death. Carried out. Restored to his mother. Mary of Magdala. The parable of the sower. The lost sheep. The hidden treasure. The greatest in the kingdom. Pp. - - - 60-66.

CHAPTER VII.

Sea of Galilee. Asleep on a pillow. Peace; be still! A mad man. "Clothed, and in his right mind." The herd of swine. The character of Jesus. "Go home to thy friends." Jesus' return to Capernaum. Jairus. His only daughter. At the Publican's house. "Who touched me?" Sowing and teaching by the way. "Thy daughter is dead." "Only believe." Pp. - - - 67-76.

CHAPTER VIII.

Sent forth. Death of John the Baptizer. A desert place. Saul and his companion. The story of the blind man. Resting with Jesus. Teaching the multitude. "Five loaves and two small fishes." Feeding the five thousand. Would make him king. The storm. In the mountain. Jesus walks on the water. Peter. Pp. - - - 77-88.

CHAPTER IX.

A fable. Teaching. Some of the disciples leave Jesus. He goes into Tyre and Sidon. Heals the Syrophenician woman's daughter. Returns to Galilee by way of Decapolis. A changed home. The work of a missionary. Deaf and dumb from childhood. "He doeth all things well." Feeding the four thousand. Pp. . - - 89-99.

CHAPTER X.

The tired Man. A glimpse of the future. Telling the disciples. Their disappointment. The transfiguration. A tale of suffering. The scoffing Scribes, the hopeless father, and the embarrassed disciples. Sunshine after rain. Pp. - - - - - 100-110.

CHAPTER XI.

The Feast of Tabernacles. Recalling the past. Talk about Jesus. The ten lepers. "Where are the nine?" A new law. Coming to Jerusalem. Types. The city. Temple and priests. A discussion. The last day of the feast. "Never man spake like this Man." Pp. 111-121.

CHAPTER XII.

What the Jews thought of Jesus. Lazarus and his sisters. An example. Martha. "Teach us to pray." A friend at midnight. Martha's complaint. The resting-place. One born blind. Philip talks with him. Jesus' anointing. On the way to the Pool. Seeing. Anger of the Jews. Put out of the synagogue. Pp. - - - 122-137.

CHAPTER XIII.

Lazarus. "He whom thou lovest is sick." Disappointed. The death of Lazarus. His burial. The coming of Jesus. Going to the tomb. "Come forth!" Great joy. A Jewish council. The sisters talk together. Mary visits Miriam. A talk by the seaside. God's love, the subject of the conversation. Unity of Father and Son. "Perfect love casteth out fear." Illustrations. Pp. - - - 138-153.

CHAPTER XIV.

The return of Jesus and Lazarus. Preparations for the feast. The guests. An alabaster box. Judas' complaint. Jesus' approval. Judas goes out. Promises to betray his Lord. John tells Mary of Jesus' blessing little children. An evening talk. Lazarus tells his sisters of the woman whom Jesus healed. Also, of Bartimeus. His history and healing. Zaccheus. The young Ruler. Pp. 154-166.

CHAPTER XV.

Going to Jerusalem. Miriam's letter to her father. She speaks of the Holy City, of the sins of her people, the captivity and rebuilding of the Temple, and tells of Jesus' triumphal entry. He weeps over the city. Retires to Mount Olivet, with his disciples. Tells the doom of their beloved city, and of the establishment of his kingdom. Pp. - - - - - 167-174.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Passover. Jesus' love to his disciples. Washes their feet. "Is it I?" He talks with them of his departure. Peter's declaration. The Lord's supper. The Comforter. His last talk with them. The prayer. The disciples asleep. His agony. He awakens them. The betrayer comes. Peter's defence. Last miracle. Bound. "To Annas!" Peter's denial. Pp. - - - 175-188.

CHAPTER XVII.

Morning. From Pilate to Herod, then back to Pilate. Faultless. Scourged. "Crucify him." His disciples. They hasten to Jerusalem. He faints beneath the cross. At Calvary. On the cross. The people discuss his life. The mother of Jesus. Great darkness over all the land. "I thirst." "It is finished." Preparations for burial. Carried to the tomb. Pp. - - - 189-200.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Early in the morning. An empty tomb. An angel. Mary comes to the tomb. The risen Lord. She tells the disciples. They disbelieve. Lazarus tells the soldier's story. Great joy among the believers. Pp. 201-209.

CHAPTER XIX.

On the way to Emmaus. A stranger. Their eyes opened. Jesus in their midst. Thomas. Sea of Galilee. "Lovest thou me?" Mount of Olives. Ascension. Pp. 210-218.

PREFACE.

I am desired by the amiable and talented Author of the beautiful book now in the hand of the reader, to write a PREFACE for the same; and most gladly do I comply with her wish.

I do so for two reasons: First — Because, knowing the lady, I believe her principal object has been to do good, which meets with my fullest sympathy; and Second — Because, after closely reading the work, I have proved that she has succeeded, at least so far as one person is concerned, being agreeably conscious, over and over again, of benefit derived from her effort.

It is possible, in writing a PREFACE, to do so from two different standpoints — that of the severe critic, and that of the friendly fellow-worker. The former standpoint is oftentimes far from commendable, the sourness, churlishness, prejudice, and occasionally positive malice of the individual appearing in the task; and even where these are absent, a display of skill to discover imperfections, simply to gain reputation as a competent bookman. Now, while no man of sense will be for laying aside the discriminative faculty, or for dispensing entirely with judgment even to disapproval; there is something better than heresy-sniffing, fault-finding, and all-round unsociability; and I leave to those who may review this work for the Press, if so disposed, the part of discovering a bone to crunch, while I devote the little space allotted me to the more genial work of calling attention to its excellencies.

In other words, this introduction is written in the spirit of a fellow-servant with the Author of the LORD JESUS CHRIST—hers and mine; and as such, it will palpitate with affection for the CHRIST OF GOD, and sympathy with the hand that has undertaken to write of him.

There have been published already so many lives of CHRIST, was another a necessity? There are the original, apostolic documents, the four Gospels, are they not sufficient for every purpose? Doubtless, the accounts of CHRIST in the Gospels, if understood, would be enough. But to the ordinary reader, not conversant with the customs of the Jews, their political status, the full force of their idioms, their partialities and antipathies, a sort of paraphrase, or commentary, is helpful to a better understanding of the inspired records. This, as has been before intimated, has been supplied by many writers of various degrees of attainment; some in the scholastic strain, some in the critical, and some with a heart beating for humanity's needs and sorrows.

Our Author's plan is to treat the recorded incidents of CHRIST's life as a continuative story, reaching its climax with his ascension into heaven, blessing his disciples while departing from them, and leaving for their consolation the promise of his re-appearance in glory, for their complete and final deliverance from sin, and their exaltation to royal dignity and everlasting felicity in the kingdom of God.

Now much can be said in favor of a story, as against a dry prolixity of statement and definition. It takes a certain class of mind, trained, disciplined, used to abstruse contemplations, to understand the latter; while everybody can take in a story. The dullest-witted gets the idea; and the keenest-minded enjoys the relish of the narrative. JESUS' parables are stories. The Master Mind chose the shell of

incident to enclose the kernel of fact, or of gracious lesson. Therefore, if our Author has the idea that a connected account of CHRIST's life is a desideratum, and out of the disjointed incidents and sentences on record, weaves, with the aid of a chaste fancy and loyal heart, such a book as that now in our hand, who will be inclined to carp?

Every thoughtful reader will see that there are difficulties in the case, which are not easy to overcome. All the words of the LORD cannot be transferred; nor always their exact form as in the English version of the Scriptures; and beside, there are four accounts to be combined into one, differing a little, as independent testimonies always do. And only some of the happenings can be recorded, unless the book is swelled to an undesirable thickness. Every reader should remember this, and make allowances where it is thought the statement is too meagre, or the account somewhat deficient.

This is all I need to say by way of general remark. In my remaining space, I will direct attention to the especially good points, which arrested my mind and won my appreciation, as I read the book. I take them in order; but can only allude to some of them—the more's the pity; since all are gems.

In the account of the Marriage of Cana, the wine gives out. And how does JESUS feel about it? Our Author says, truly and beautifully: "Rejoicing in the joy of the bridegroom and bride, he now sympathized with their need, and determined in his heart what he would do." Then we read of the water turned into wine. And the incident is finished with this exquisite passage: "He who would not turn stones into bread to relieve his own sufferings, would turn water into wine to comfort the heart of a simple village host! And by his presence and the miracle performed by

him at the marriage of Cana, he gives for all time his approbation of our innocent joys."

The next sketch is of the Nobleman's Son, who was sick. The recital is very graphic: "The young man was in mighty conflict with the enemy Death. In his throes, he seemed to be battling with a huge monster; and at times, all weary and worn, he would sink back, until it seemed Death had claimed his victim. Then again he would start; and so the struggle continued. . . . Noon had passed, when the watchers noticed a change: was he sinking away, or was he sleeping? They dared not speak nor touch him; they could only wait and watch. The perspiration dampened his tangled hair; the feverish flush left his cheek; and his breathing became quiet and normal. Then he opened his eyes, that had long rolled with pain, and seeing his mother, held out his hand to her. It was cool and moist. The disease had fled; and feeling hungry, he called for food." The account closes thus: "O, the joy of that household! What welcome awaited the Master when he should visit Capernaum! Wonderful Saviour! no cry of distress escapes thine ear, or passes unheeded. Appeal to thee is not in vain!"

Writing of the marvellous draught of fishes, taken by PETER in obedience to the command of CHRIST to push out from the shore and let down the net on the right side of the ship, our Author connects it with PETER's willingness to oblige the LORD, by lending him his boat from which to discourse to the people, who pressed upon him. She says: "How proud the disciple was of his LORD! and to have any of his few possessions of service to him!" And then later: "Where did the fish all come from? Were they in the spot at which they were taken by JESUS' command? What a reward only for lending his boat to the blessed

Master, and that but for a single sermon! Such recompense for such insignificant service!"

Another picture is of JESUS in retirement with God. "In the morning ere the city was awake from her slumbers, long before the day had begun, JESUS rose from his bed, and went out into a solitary place to pray. It is not recorded where that place was; possibly it was some quiet nook by the edge of the Lake, where only the twitter of the birds, and the call of a few distant fishermen, as they toiled at their nets, broke the stillness of the surroundings. In this solitude, during the fresh morning hours, JESUS held communion with his FATHER. How sweet the secrets between him and the FATHER! Who can tell how near the angels came to him? or what the messages they brought him from heaven?"

The description given of Jesus' followers is very striking. Remarking that the rich and great of the Jewish nation would only accept a deliverer of noble birth; and that "hence they were in no way ready to receive the meek and lowly Man whose disciples were fishermen; who wandered from city to city always on foot; who associated with Samaritans and preached to the motley crowd by the sea-side; who had no family distinction, save that his mother was one of the poorer daughters of the lineage of DAVID; and who had no place to lay his head at night, except as hospitable persons would give him a welcome to their homes;" our Author describes the Master's disciples thus: "A few of the noble and learned believed on him; but his train of followers were the poor and disconsolate whose hearts he had healed; the sinful and notorious whose sins he had forgiven; the lame and blind and deaf ones whom he had cured; the lepers he had cleansed, and those out of whom he had cast unclean spirits — these made up the

throng that loved him, ministered to him, and accepted him as LORD."

A specimen of the sublime is found in a description of the Sea of Galilee and the danger of shipwreck thereon, JESUS being asleep: "Beautiful Sea of Galilee! can it be that thy placid waters could ever frown and rage so fiercely with thy Master asleep on thy bosom? How often hast thou invited him to thy side! how often have thy curling waves kissed his feet! and now when he trust thee, thou betrayest him, and wouldst swallow him up in thy fury!" And a little later, when JESUS is awakened, it is said, he was "not sorry that they had called him, but sorry that they were so fearful, and so doubted his loving care."

There is a delightful passage speaking of the result of CHRIST's healing power: "Never in the history of Jerusalem and its surrounding villages, or in lovely Galilee, had joy been such a universal guest as now. Homes that had been shadowed by sickness so long, were made bright with health and strength. Darkened rooms and hushed voices had given way to glorious sunshine and merry laughter. The leper had returned to wife and children; the demoniac to father and mother. No longer were those terrible spasms dreaded; no longer were the lips taught to say, 'Unclean! Unclean!'"

To the tired worker, our Author says, in speaking of CHRIST's turning aside for a brief respite from labor: "O, weary gleaner! JESUS would have thee rest with him, away from the city's bustle; he would talk to thee alone; and the secret of his presence is so sweet! Art thou sorrowing because all the world is shut out, and a great gulf lies between thee and thy friends? Cheer thee, drooping heart! it may be that JESUS hath brought thee to this desert place to whisper some secrets of his love to thee."

The feeding of the five thousand is said to be "the LORD's entertainment; he was the host, they [the people] the guests, and the disciples the servants!"

The continual demand upon the Saviour is plainly portrayed: "It was 'Give, give, give;' from the multitude. Followed for the loaves and fishes; sought that he might heal; welcomed that he might impart some new blessing: such was his reception among mankind. Even some of the disciples followed him for the sake of the coming glory of his promised kingdom; while only a few, a very few, responded to his pure, sympathetic nature."

Our Author exhibits JESUS passing through Samaria, going to Jerusalem, and notes the fact that the prejudiced Samaritans refused him admission to their city, yet immediately he cures one of their people—among the ten whom he cleansed—causing a conversation among the disciples, and bringing vividly out the unselfishness of JESUS: "For what doth he this great good? Not that he may receive favor; for he sayeth unto JOHN that he returneth no more into Galilee, nor passeth through this country again; therefore they cannot do him good if they would, since he giveth them not the opportunity."

The description of the blind man sent by JESUS to the Pool of Siloam for the recovery of his sight, is very touching. The afflicted man speaks: "O, how wonderful it will be to see the hills, and birds, and trees. I once had a bird in my hand, and felt its little head, and wings and feathers. They told me its feathers were different colors, and very beautiful; but I could not understand what 'colors' meant. My mother tells me that the sky is blue, and the grass green; and that the flowers are white, yellow and red; but I cannot comprehend it. She once told me that some mornings the grass is all covered with little

drops of water, which she called 'dew,' and that in the sunshine they sparkle like gems. 'What is the sunshine? and what is it to sparkle?' I asked; but she only said, 'My poor child!' and I heard her sob." The story continues, until the man gets his sight; when he exclaims: 'O, PHILIP! is this seeing? Wonderful! wonderful!'"

I must stop here — about in the middle of what I would like to have said and quoted. And what shall be my last words? This will I say: Go, good book! glorify the CHRIST of GOD! make many hearts glad with faith, hope and love! And may it appear, when results shall be revealed, that thou wast planned, written, and sent forth in GOD!

W. KELLAWAY.

STORIES FROM THE LIFE OF THE WONDERFUL.

CHAPTER I.

O, WONDERFUL! in name and deed;
Great Prophet long foretold;
Well did The Baptist point Thee out,
And say, "The Lamb behold!"

—*W. Kellaway.*

SOFTLY the setting sun was laying his last rays on the summit of the Judean hills, as a father, in departing, will sometimes place his hand in benediction upon the heads of his sons; but Jerusalem, most favored and most admired, knelt like a daughter in the midst of her brothers to receive his parting blessing; and it was on her that the gorgeous king of day shone most fondly, till all her housetops, minarets, arches and gateways gleamed, like jewels, with glory resplendent, in answer to his benignant smile.

Just then, two priests came out of the Temple, and walked slowly down the marble steps, passing through the gate into the city. They thought little of the exceeding beauty of the closing day; but seemed in perplexity, and presently com-

menced conversation upon a subject which presumably was the cause of their anxiety.

"It bringeth to mind the days of the prophets; since which time the Lord hath kept long silence," said one of the priests to his companion.

"Yea, verily; it was like, and yet unlike, the voice of God in the thunders of Sinai," responded the other; "but if we favor this wild tumult among the common people, who knoweth into what jeopardy it will drive our nation?"

"Thou speakest well; and until this Man proveth himself to be the true and promised MESSIAH, it behoveth us to consider diligently, lest we be rash; for at this time many deceivers are abroad in the world."

"What is it thou hast seen and heard that is so marvellous?" inquired a Scribe, who chanced to hear the two priests talking of the wonderful occurrence of the day before.

"Why! didst thou not hear of the strange event at the river Jordan, yesterday?" asked the first speaker.

"There had been so much talk of one called a Prophet," he continued, "and of the multitudes who flock to him in the wilderness, where he daily baptizeth, that we thought we would go and see him for ourselves.

"We found him surrounded by thousands of persons, and could scarcely get near him for the press; but little by little we edged our way in until we could hear his discourse; and we found he was upbraiding our nation and people for their sins. It is said, he had a remarkable birth; that his father

was a priest, and was dumb for months before he was born, because he doubted an angelic message conveyed to him one day while serving in the Temple, that he was to have a son. It is also said that he has spent a large portion of his life in the solitude of the wilderness, and that his food has been locusts and wild honey. His attire is the skin of an animal, girt in at the waist. Altogether, he presents a most striking appearance. But his look is less remarkable than his preaching, and the wonderful power with which he holds the people spell-bound.

“But I was going to tell you what occurred yesterday. This Prophet, who is generally called **JOHN THE BAPTIZER**, was saying, in reply to a question, that he was not the **MESSIAH**, but was the voice of one crying in the wilderness, saying, ‘Prepare the way of the **LORD!**’ when, suddenly, he stopped. A most significant pause followed,—an unusual silence, which seemed to presage a remarkable communication; when, as we looked in the direction in which he was gazing, we saw a Stranger, a young man, of uncommon dignity and gravity, approaching. Why we watched him so intently we could not tell; but the Prophet, not for one moment taking his eyes from him, pointed towards him, and said: ‘Behold the **LAMB OF GOD**, which taketh away the sins of the world!’

“Whether he had been long in the throng listening to the Prophet’s burning words, or whether he had just come from some neighboring village, we did not learn; but evidently he was in sympathy with the Prophet, for he went directly to him, and

demanded baptism at his hands. At first the Prophet hesitated, and we could hear him say:

“ ‘I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?’ ”

“ ‘Suffer it to be so now,’ replied the Stranger; ‘for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.’ ”

“ Although the Prophet was not slow to reprove the soldiers, and even the Scribes and Pharisees, for their sins, yet he had no words of reproof for this Man, whom he seemed to know; and with peculiar reverence, albeit with hesitancy, he led him down into the river and baptized him.

“ We all stood in breathless silence, stretching our necks in watching, expecting something to happen — though we hardly knew what — when lo! the heavens suddenly opened! A little white cloud, at first scarcely noticable, appeared from the midst of the brightness; but afterward, as it came nearer, we saw it was a dove. Finally, it settled on the head of the Stranger, who appeared not at all surprised at the circumstance. We were astonished beyond expression; but were almost overcome when we heard a voice, deep and musical, saying:

“ ‘This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.’ ”

“ Who is this Stranger? ” asked the Scribe; “ and where did he come from? ”

“ His name is ‘JESUS’; and it is said he was named by an angel before he was born,” continued the priest. “ Many extraordinary things are told of his birth and infancy. Only to-day we heard that thirty years ago a child was born of a Virgin

and was named 'JESUS'; and that Wise Men came from the East, with costly gifts, to worship him; saying, it had been revealed to them that he was born to be 'King of the Jews.' And that heartless martyrdom of all male babies under two years of age, by HEROD, which reminded one of the cruel edict of PHARAOH in the days of Egyptian bondage, was for the sole purpose of sacrificing his young life. But his parents, being warned of GOD in a dream, fled into Egypt, and thus saved him."

"Yes," said the other priest; "I also heard that story, and I was further told, that this same child's birth was announced to five or six simple shepherds, by an angel, one night, as they were watching their flocks, who was joined by a company of heavenly beings who took up the chorus of praise to GOD. Indeed, I believe the man who reported this wonderful occurrence was himself one of the shepherds, and therefore an eye-witness; and yesterday's marvellous sight brought back afresh to his mind what he had seen."

"These things are truly wonderful. And I can never forget a youth of the same name as this Stranger, who came into the Temple about eighteen years ago," said the Scribe. "He was twelve years old at the time; and so remarkable a child I never met before nor since. We were discussing some difficult point of the Law, when he asked a question that was as a beam of light on the subject. Why! one would have thought, by his dignity and acquaintance with the Law, that he himself made it. Our learned doctors were surprised at his wisdom and knowledge; for, testing

him with many questions, he readily answered them, and this with a force of truth that seemed like authority.

“I believe he had been lost among the large company which came to the yearly Passover; for while we were so intently talking, his parents came seeking him; and when his mother gently reproved him for leaving them, he replied:

“‘Know ye not that I must be about my FATHER’S business?’

“He went with them, however, and I have never heard of him since; but the name ‘JESUS’ brings it all back to my mind, and I doubt not that all these strange occurrences belong to the same one of whom you have spoken.”

Nor were these three men alone talking of the striking incident of the day previous; but all along the highway, in the surrounding villages, and in the city of Jerusalem, men hailed each other and queried what this strange manifestation meant.

Just at this time the Jewish nation was in a very disturbed condition. The Romans had laid a heavy yoke upon them, so that they were no longer a free people, but were like prisoners in their own house. The armed soldiers guarding their beloved city; the yearly taxation and enrollment; the submission of all cases to the Roman Governor, told too plainly that they were in subjection to other laws than the God-given ones of Mount Sinai.

The yoke was galling; and the oppressed people sighed and longed for deliverance. O, for another JOSHUA to lead them on to victory! And hence, no wonder when the Prophet JOHN commenced his

remarkable career in the desert, and multitudes flocked to hear him, that the expectant people hastened to ask: "Who art thou?" and mused in their hearts if he were the ANOINTED OF GOD, or not. And hope grew still stronger to some who looked for redemption, when the young man called JESUS made his appearance, introduced by such a divine announcement.

At the time of his baptism JESUS was about thirty years of age, and was supposed to be the son of JOSEPH, the carpenter, who dwelt in Nazareth. JOSEPH, and MARY his mother, were direct descendants of King DAVID, and of the tribe of JUDAH. JESUS was born in Bethlehem, but was raised in Nazareth, a little village that nestled among the hills, about eighty miles from Jerusalem.

Situate a little back from the main thoroughfare to Jerusalem, and having no particular distinction in history, Nazareth's greatest attraction was probably peace and quietness; and for this reason, it may be, JOSEPH and MARY chose it for their dwelling-place, when Roman jealousy and suspicion ran high against the Jewish people. The surrounding hills afforded a splendid view; and doubtless the boyish feet of JESUS had often climbed their grassy slopes, while his eyes feasted on the exceeding beauty of the fruitful plains below, with their rivers running through them like silver threads; and in the far distance, he could not but have caught glimpses of the walled cities, with their glistening domes and towers. Jerusalem was dearest to his heart; and as he would turn his face

toward it in his devotions, he would sigh over its departed glory, and long for its redemption.

How beautiful was the boyhood and budding manhood of JESUS! Being perfect in form and limb, with grace and dignity and purity of thought accompanying every word and action, he was a welcome guest among the villagers, and grew in favor with the people.

All these years he was subject to his parents, and being of lowly birth, he was taught to use the saw, plane and hammer, and was skilled in the various branches of house-building, so that his early life was one of activity and labor. Nor was his education entirely neglected. We can easily imagine the lovely and noble Jewish mother sitting with her son in the twilight of the long summer days, reading the historical account of the battles and glorious victories of the Jews, and talking with JESUS of the bondage of the Children of ISRAEL in Egypt, and later in Babylon; also of the brave leaders, and of the wise and godly young man DANIEL, and his three companions, among which leaders DAVID was most beloved.

Would those days of kingly grandeur and glory ever be restored? And then the mother thinks of her son, the ruddy youth beside her; and memory brings back the visit of the three Wise Men of the East, who came with gifts to worship this very boy, when a babe, saying: "Where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the East, and are come to worship him." And she also remembers when she took him into the Temple, a tiny infant, to offer the prescribed

sacrifice, that an old man, just and devout, by the name of SIMEON, took the babe in his arms, and blessed him, and said: "LORD, now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." The prophetess ANNA, likewise, a woman of great age, and who served GOD continually in the Temple, when she beheld him, gave thanks to GOD, and spake of him to all them who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

CHAPTER II.

Behold the Champion of our race;
He meets the Tempter face to face;
He fights him—see APOLLYON flee!
May I resist him, LORD, like thee.

—*W. Kellaway.*

OVER a month had passed since the baptism of JESUS, and though many enquired for him, none knew where he had gone. Some said they had seen him making his way toward the wilderness; but this was all they knew, and sympathetic hearts trembled as they thought of the dreariness and of the wild beasts of that place.

Truly, after his baptism and the descent of the HOLY SPIRIT, he entered upon a new life. The great responsibility of his calling weighed heavily upon him, and he longed for seclusion, and communion with GOD, his Father. Driven by an unseen power, and the desire to be alone with GOD, he immediately went into the desert, and cast himself on the ground, upon his face.

The great sins of his own people and their painful oppression, with all their dark forebodings, was a reality to him. How he sighed for them; as a mother sighs over a disobedient child, who she knows must be punished! and how willingly would he give up all, yes, even life itself, to save them! Indeed, the guilt and burden of the whole world

came rushing in upon him, and he longed that all kingdoms might be one, and all peoples righteous. In his great agony he cared naught for food; and for forty days and nights he prayed and fasted.

All these days the enemy was busy preparing his temptations and devices, and at the end of this period, when JESUS became hungry and faint, he approached him, saying artfully and with pretended sympathy:

"If thou be the SON OF GOD, command that these stones be made bread."

Always on the alert to take us in our weakness, and knowing that through the appetite he beguiled our first parents, he tries his craft upon the suffering JESUS. But in vain! He is one who would rather suffer at the hands of GOD than partake of good at the suggestion of SATAN. And so JESUS replies:

"Man shall not live by bread alone; but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of GOD."

Covering his vexation with a veil of feigned approval, he suggests, by flattering words:

"Thou art a righteous SON, and thy FATHER will be glad to honor thee, as he did at thy baptism. See yonder pinnacle! go, cast thyself down from thence to the ground, before all the people, that they may see GOD's special love and protection for thee; that thou mayest glory; for is it not written: 'He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands shall they bear thee up, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone'?"

Is JESUS inclined in the least to follow the counsel of the Deceiver, clothed in garments of light, using soft beguiling words, seeking to persuade him to make an open test of the FATHER's special love? Decidedly, no! although natural ambition would be gratified, and spiritual pride bow her head at such a statement. There is neither in him. "Keep thou me back from presumptuous sins," we think we hear him say, in prayerful accents; and a moment later he turns to SATAN with the short but decisive answer:

"Thou shalt not tempt the LORD thy GOD."

Defeated but not conquered, this deadly enemy, with an air of authority, says:

"You were born to be King: now all the kingdoms of the world are under my control; and if thou wilt only acknowledge my power, I will give them all to thee."

Astonished at such audacity, the Man who heretofore has shown signs of exhaustion from extreme suffering, now rises in imperial strength. Looking intently upon his Adversary, recognizing in him the Arch-Fiend, his eyes blaze with righteous indignation, and calling him by his true name, he sternly commands:

"Get thee behind me, SATAN!"

The contest is over and the foe has departed; but the strain has been too much for JESUS, who sinks prostrate to the ground. He who a few weeks ago was the ideal of physical strength, now trembles with weakness; but—the victory is gained!

In those days of agony and temptation, there was no human eye to pity; no hand put forth to

soothe the fevered brow; no sympathetic heart to encourage the Sufferer. But angels hovered near; and while some bore the tidings back to heaven that the SON OF GOD had stood the test, others approached and ministered to him for his human necessities.

But he must go back now to the busy world; not as the son of JOSEPH, but as the SON OF GOD; for had not GOD—the great JEHOVAH—acknowledged him as his son at the baptismal waters, not two months before?

The rulers of the Jews and the common people were still making inquiry for the lost Stranger; and while many yet visited the prophet JOHN, and were baptized of him, nevertheless his star was fast setting; as the morning-star pales before the brightness of the sun; and many expectant eyes were turned toward the Young Man whom Heaven itself had announced.

JOHN, however, was not without devoted followers; and one evening as two of them sat upon the river's brink, JOHN being with them, and talked of the MESSIAH, whom JOHN had already told them was come, and that he was the MESSIAH upon whom they had seen the SPIRIT OF GOD descend; he said, slowly and impressively:

“He must increase; but I must decrease.”

“But where is he now, beloved Master?” asked one, whose name was ANDREW.

“I know not,” replied the Prophet; “but he will return, and will tell you things yet to come. MOSES was with GOD in the Mount forty days; and he said: ‘A Prophet shall the LORD your GOD

raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me'; therefore, if the MESSIAH goes into retirement forty days before he comes forth to bring deliverance, those days are about accomplished."

As they were still talking, a man was approaching. The disciples thought it was some one of the rulers, seeking a private interview with JOHN, that he might ask him some questions. But their Master, with vision touched by the SPIRIT OF GOD, recognized in this Stranger the subject of their conversation, and, with a brightened eye and a voice full of gladness and welcome, exclaimed:

"Behold the LAMB OF GOD!"

Instantly they followed him, unwilling to lose sight of him again. Great was their longing to talk with him; and JESUS, knowing their thoughts, turned and said:

"What dost thou desire?"

"Master! where dwellest thou? that we may ask thee of things concerning the kingdom," they answered.

"Come and see," he said; and they went with him to his home. And there for the remaining hours of the day he opened to them many dark sayings, and explained to them the unfolding prophecies regarding himself.

The joy of believing that the long-looked-for MESSIAH had at last really come, so filled their hearts that they were unable to sleep; and while lying awake, waiting for the morning to dawn, that they might tell to all the people the glad news, they praised GOD that they lived at the time of his advent.

“He was among us, and we knew him not,” said ANDREW.

“Yea, verily,” responded JOHN, his companion. “I wonder when he will take to himself his great power, and reign. I rejoice that I have found him so soon; and I am resolved to leave all, and follow him wheresoever he goeth. I doubt not that the city of Jerusalem will receive him with great demonstration when he shall present himself; which I suppose he will do at the Feast of the Passover, now nigh at hand.”

“Dost thou think he will do signs and wonders?”

“Probably he will drive out the oppressor as with a whirlwind, and restore peace and plenty to our borders in such a marvellous way that all people shall wonder and fear before him, as the heathen did before JOSHUA.”

Thus did they talk of coming glory till far on in the night, and early in the morning departed to their own homes to tell of the MESSIAH, whom the Greeks called the CHRIST.

The news of JESUS' return from the wilderness, and that he had talked with two of JOHN's disciples, spread fast over the country, and already numbers had flocked to see and hear him.

ANDREW hastened to tell his brother SIMON that they had found the MESSIAH; and PHILIP sought out his friend NATHANAEL.

“We have found him of whom MOSES, in the law, and the Prophets did write!” said PHILIP to NATHANAEL, jubilantly.

NATHANAEL was a young man who feared GOD and looked for redemption; but being surprised

that the CHRIST should be called the son of JOSEPH, and be raised in such obscurity, he half-doubtingly asked:

“Can such great good as we are looking for come from Nazareth?”

“Come and see!” said the confident PHILIP, assured, if his friend could be in JESUS’ presence but an hour, all doubts would vanish. Indeed, he but echoed the words of the Psalmist, uttered hundreds of years before: “O, taste and see that the LORD is good!”

The first disciples were charmed by the sobriety and grace of their LORD, and would sit for hours listening to his words. He was unlike any other teacher, so kind was he. Always patient when they seemed slow to understand; praising and blessing them for their faith; and tender in reproof of their unbelief.

When he spoke of his mission being one of sadness, and that his cause would be rejected, they turned a deaf ear, blindly believing that all men would receive him. So they went forth, confidently carrying the glad news, and in three days six men had joined themselves to him as his disciples, while many others believed on him as the Redeemer of ISRAEL.

Up to this time JESUS had worked no miracle, and while some who were slow to accept him desired a sign, the disciples were satisfied to believe in him simply for the gracious words he spake to them.

On the fourth day after his return to Galilee, there was a wedding, at Cana, and JESUS, his

mother and his disciples were among the invited guests. Many others also were bidden, some of whom came more to see JESUS than to witness the marriage.

While in the midst of the feast, it was reported among the relatives and near friends of the host that the wine had given out. Naturally there was considerable embarrassment, which was not unknown to the Master. Rejoicing in the joy of the bridegroom and bride, he now sympathized with their need, and determined in his heart what he would do. His mother had suggested that as they had run out of wine he might in some way supply their want; but in answer JESUS said to her: "Woman! what have I to do with thee?"

During his childhood he had acknowledged her word as law, and had subjected himself to her; but now his FATHER had called him to enter upon a new life and work, and in this she must not dictate. Henceforth the voice of suffering and distress was always to be a command to him, whether it came from the heart of a stranger, or from his own mother or brethren; and she—noble Woman!—understood it; and said, turning to the servants:

"Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it."

According to the orders given them, presently, at the command of JESUS, the servants filled six water-pots to the brim; and at his further command, drew out and carried to the Ruler of the feast the sweetest and best wine he had ever tasted.

"Why hast thou kept the best wine till the last of the feast?" said the ruler to the bridegroom, as

murmurs of praise and approval of the excellent drink were carried from lip to lip among the guests. Finally, inquiry was made of the servants; but they said: "We cannot tell how this came: we only know that the young man called JESUS bade us fill six water-pots with water, and when we drew it forth at his word, behold, it was wine, pure and sweet!"

Wonder showed upon every countenance; and and when they sought JESUS to thank him, it was discovered that he had left.

He who would not turn stones into bread to relieve his own sufferings, would turn water into wine to comfort the heart of a simple village host! And by his presence, and the miracle performed by him at the marriage of Cana, he gives for all time his approbation of our innocent joys.

CHAPTER III.

'Tis well with the boy, for Jesus has said,
"Go, father! thy child doth live!"
And still, though in heaven, he listens to prayer,
And health and salvation doth give.

—*W. Kellaway.*

THE feast of the Jews was now at hand, and JESUS and his disciples made preparations to go. After several days of travel, over mountains, in the valley of the Jordan, and through fruitful plains, they came at last to the Holy City.

They had passed many companies of pilgrims on their way to the feast; also men with cages of innocent doves, which were being taken there to be sacrificed, and droves of sheep and of oxen. The low murmur of voices formed a sweet musical accompaniment for the harsh cries of these drovers, as they urged on their lingering flocks that stopped for a moment now and again to nibble the sweet green grass; and for the merry shouts and laughter of the youths, who walked beside the pack-horses and mules upon which the old men, matrons and maidens rode and the baggage was carried, or ran from group to group picking the wild flowers by the roadside. All this was pleasant to the travellers, and helped beguile the otherwise tedious journey. At night the families separated, each going to their own little tent; and

search was made for missing children. This reminded MARY of her own sorrowful search for her lost boy many years before; but now he was a man at her side, whose fame was extending over all the land. When finally they came to the gate of Jerusalem, the road was thronged with pilgrims. Some had camped outside the city, unable to get in; but in the morning, as soon as the gates were opened, they were the first to enter.

JESUS had often worshipped in Jerusalem; and had as often been grieved at the sinful, money-making schemes of the traders in the Temple. In the days of the righteous kings and rulers, each brought his own sheep, or dove, or bullock for his offering; but now great droves of animals were penned in the outer court of the Temple, to be sold to the worshippers at an exorbitant price; while the men with the doves cared nothing for the sacred use to which the helpless birds were to be put; their only thought was the gain they would bring them. Still farther back, in the rear of the beautiful porch, with its ceiling of polished cedar, its floor of inlaid marble, and its pillars, some sixty feet high, hewn out of solid marble, sat the money-changers, their tables covered with piles of various small coins.

All this JESUS gazed upon with displeasure. The sacred quiet of the Temple had given way to confusion, where the loud tones of the traders, the clinking of the money, the lowing of the sheep and oxen, and the cooing of the doves, mingled incongruously with the chants of the priests and the worship of the people. It was more than he could

endure; and as he thought of the sacred worship in the days of King SOLOMON; and of the heavenly order around the Throne of God, where the angels bow in reverence, crying, "Holy, holy, holy;" his indignation knew no bounds; so, making a whip of small cords, he drove the herds from their stalls, chased out the money-changers, overthrew the tables of coins, and commanded the cages of doves to be taken thence. The people rushed out in a mass; while women and children screamed, and cried out in their fright. The disciples trembled and withdrew to one side, while some of the rulers demanded of him:

"By what authority doest thou these things?"

"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again," he answered, speaking of the temple of his body; but they, thinking he referred to the beautiful place of worship, said:

"Forty and six years was this Temple in building, and wilt thou rebuild it in three days?" and they laughed scornfully.

Many were the wonderful things he did and said while for eight months he taught in the streets and villages of Judea. About this time JOHN THE BAPTIZER was put into prison, which made JESUS withdraw again into Galilee.

Beautiful Galilee! with its lake of smiling waters, and on its shores the homes of the fishermen he so loved! There too, in the proud city of Capernaum, dwelt his mother and brethren; and in a small village not many miles distant from that city was the home of his childhood, which he longed to visit.

On his way, he must needs go through Samaria; and as he came near to Sychar, he sat down on JACOB'S well to rest. He was weary with his journey; and while his disciples went into the city to buy bread, he waited for them there.

No doubt he desired to refresh himself and his disciples in that place hallowed by association with the patriarch JACOB. Hereabout was the rich pasture-land where his flocks had so often fed, and this was the well from which they were watered. Not far away was the tomb of JOSEPH, that favorite son of JACOB'S, the one for whom he bought this very piece of ground; and long years after the death of JOSEPH, when the Children of Israel were freed from Egyptian bondage and on their way to the promised land, they had encamped in this same beautiful valley. As JESUS sat there, he could easily imagine the scene of that devout assembly, when all the tribes congregated between the mountains, and half of the rulers, judges and priests stood on this mount, and half on that; and while the priests read the curses one by one from Mount Ebal, all the people said "Amen"; and likewise were the blessings read from Mount Gerizim. What a solemn occasion it was! But the people soon forgot their vows, and had been led away into idolatry and disobedience to GOD, till the curses, rather than the blessings, had descended upon them.

As JESUS sat there on the broken well, leaning his tired head upon his hand, a Woman came to draw water; and he, being thirsty as well as weary, asked her for a drink.

Many years had gone by since the Jews had had any dealings with the Samaritans, and the Woman, recognizing this Stranger to be a Jew, in surprise, questioned how he came to ask her for a drink. JESUS wisely evaded the question; but told her that he could give her living water, of which if one drank he would never thirst again; but that water would be in him a "well of water, springing up into everlasting life."

Beautiful words of our LORD, "springing up"! Never stagnant nor offensive; but, like an artesian well, which overflows its bounds and breaks out into hundreds of little streams, gladdening and reviving the drooping flowers and grain; so would his salvation be in our hearts, copious and free, until we could say with DAVID: "My cup runneth over."

The woman, although a worshipper of the true GOD, understood not this deeper meaning, and thinking he was speaking of earthly things, said eagerly:

"Give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw."

But the heart needed probing and cleansing before the LORD could implant his salvation there; so he touched the secret spring of all her life, and said:

"Go, call thy husband, and come hither."

Instantly the proud head drooped, and she who might have sought to deceive another, said truthfully to him whom she now believed to be a prophet:

"I have no husband."

While they were still talking the disciples returned, and the woman, leaving her pitcher, hurried into the city, and with almost breathless excitement said to her friends and neighbors:

“Come, see a Man who told me all things that ever I did: is not this the CHRIST?”

More than one took up her words, which were dropped like sparks of fire all over the city, until the whole place was ablaze with the news: “A Prophet is among us!”

“Tarry with us,” they said, “O Prophet of the most high GOD, and tell us more of the wonderful things of the kingdom;” and while he abode with them for two days, he taught them marvellous things out of the Law, and many believed on him. Scores of doors and hearts were opened to him there; national bigotry and pride were broken down; and when he departed, they followed him to the borders of the town, and desired him to return again to them. To the Woman, whose face was all aglow with her new-found joy, they said:

“Now we believe, not because of thy saying; for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the CHRIST, the SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD.”

He had gone down to Jerusalem, as a son would go to his father’s house; but though its inhabitants honored the FATHER, they envied the SON, and would not receive him, saying he was an “impostor”; so now he was returning to Galilee, and here the people received him gladly. He soon went down to Cana, where he had performed his first

miracle, and there he met a Nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

The Nobleman had heard of the fame of JESUS—how he made the water into wine; and the ruler NICODEMUS had told him of his driving the buyers and sellers out of the Temple at Jerusalem; and that he had visited him one night to ask questions, and with what wisdom and power he had discoursed upon the necessity of a spiritual change to inherit the kingdom of God: all these things he had heard, and he wondered if a Man of such power and authority could not heal the sick as well. So he went to JESUS, and implored him to come down to his house and heal his son.

He had come to Cana on business, and his servants had just brought him word that his son was very sick. Physicians had been summoned, they said, and had pronounced the case hopeless. The young man was an only son, the hope and pride of the home. He had been stricken down suddenly, and the fond parents were almost beside themselves with grief. The sad tidings had been sent to the absent father to come quickly, ere his son should die, and he begs JESUS to go with him. For a moment JESUS hesitates, and says, inquiringly:

“Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.”

“O, Sir!” said the agonized father, “come down, before my child die.”

“Go thy way: thy son liveth;” said JESUS.

Meantime, in that lovely palace-home in Capernaum, every heart was wringing in anguish. The

young man was in mighty conflict with the enemy Death. In his throes he seemed to be battling with a huge monster; and at times, all weary and worn, he would sink back, until it seemed that Death had claimed his victim. Then again he would start, and so the struggle continued. Wealth and friends stood back, entirely helpless; and sometimes mother and sisters would cry out: "O, that father were here!" They had sent for him; but waiting his coming hours seemed like days. Still the fever raged, and groans came from the sick room like death knells.

Noon had passed when the watchers noticed a change: was he sinking away, or was he sleeping? They dared not speak nor touch him; they could only wait and watch. The perspiration dampened his tangled hair; the feverish flush left his cheek; and his breathing became quiet and normal. Then he opened his eyes, that had long rolled with pain, and seeing his mother, held out his hand to her. It was cool and moist. The disease had fled; and feeling hungry, he called for food.

A messenger was hastily dispatched to his father with the words, "Thy son is recovering;" and when the messenger told him the hour the fever left him, the Nobleman knew it was the same as that in which JESUS had spoken the word.

O, the joy of that household! What welcome awaited the Master when he should visit Capernaum! Wonderful Saviour! no cry of distress escapes thine ear or passes unheeded. Appeal to thee is not in vain!

CHAPTER IV.

Great was the joy when eyes beheld,
And ears were made alive to sound;
When tongues were loosed to talk and sing,
And feet could nimbly move around;
When, ordered forth, the demons fled,
And life retangled in the dead.

—*W. Kellaway.*

AFTER a very brief visit at Nazareth, JESUS returned to Capernaum. He had spent a Sabbath with the friends of his childhood, and had taught in their synagogue. How familiar was every spot! The hills which he had so often climbed; the houses, some of which he himself had helped to build; and his own humble home, where so many happy hours had been spent with his mother—all seemed to welcome him back. But the people, who had praised him in boyhood, holding him up as a pattern for their own sons, were now turned with envy against him.

“Is not this JOSEPH’s son?” they inquired; “from whence, then, hath he this wisdom? and how doth he teach us?”

Indeed, so violent did they become, that a mob—scum which rises to the surface when national or social feeling is at boiling point—led him to the top of a hill and would have cast him over its brow down its steep declivity upon the rocks below; but

JESUS, eluding them in some manner, withdrew from them, and went sadly on his way.

His first disciples were still dwelling by the Sea of Galilee, engaged a portion of their time in their old occupation of fishing. They were poor men, and toiled hard to make a livelihood; but their hearts were tender and trustful. PETER was married; and at his house JESUS frequently stayed; indeed, he came and went with the freedom of a brother.

JOHN and JAMES dwelt with their father ZEBEDEE. JOHN was little more than a boy; but O, how he loved JESUS! The other disciples were equally devoted, but in a different way. They admired the courage and power of JESUS, felt the divinity of his teaching concerning righteousness, and were charmed with what he told them of coming glory. PETER, especially, the leader of the little company, was ever ready to defend his beloved LORD — with more zeal, sometimes, than knowledge. But JOHN, gained admittance to his innermost affections; even as the high priest of the Mosaic economy penetrated the holiest, the secret place of the MOST HIGH.

How was this? Ah! no one can explain love, or tell exactly how it is begotten. We know, however, it runs from heart to heart, and so unites them that they will break sooner than separate. Love! it is more than benevolence; it is deeper than admiration; it is not comprehended in enthusiasm or zeal: indeed, one may have all these, and yet lack love. Love delights itself in the presence of its lord; it hangs on his every word;

it bows to his slightest wish; it searches out ways of service; it seeks retirement from distraction; its eye brightens at the presence and droops at the absence of its beloved: just in these ways did JOHN show his devotion to JESUS; and that dear Heart that so often bled on account of the harsh, cold, cruel treatment of those whom he came to save, responded to his follower's sympathetic touch, until some spoke of JOHN as "the disciple whom JESUS loved." Not that he did not love the others; but there was a sensibility in the Master's heart of a finer, more delicate attachment in JOHN than in any of the rest.

Although JESUS may often before have visited the sea, yet this morning he found his disciples unusually busy. They had brought their boats to land, and were washing and mending their nets. They had toiled all night and had taken nothing. And from their long fishing and want of success, he found them both worn and discouraged.

JESUS walked past them, looking at the blue, curling waves, seemingly in meditation; it might be he was thinking of the promise GOD made to ABRAHAM, that his seed should be "as the sand which is upon the sea-shore"—innumerable.

The people had seen him wending his way toward the lake, and had followed him there one by one, and in little companies. Some of them brought sick friends, and those possessed with demons. The numbers increased until the shore was thronged with people, and JESUS could hardly be seen or heard for the multitude which pressed upon him. So stepping into the boat belonging to

PETER, he desired him to put off a little from the shore; which he willingly did. Thence JESUS taught the people, PETER sitting beside him, and drinking in every word.

How proud the disciple was of his LORD! and how glad to have any of his few possessions of service to him! Happy to the full, he seemed to himself like a door-keeper in the House of the LORD. When JESUS finished his discourse to the people, he turned to PETER and said:

“Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.”

“Why, Master!” said the astonished disciple, “we have toiled all night and have taken nothing.” But this was not all he said; for he immediately added; “Nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net.”

We know not all the thoughts that passed through PETER's mind; but obediently to JESUS, when he had gotten a distance from the shore, he lowered his net, and encircled a great number of fishes. He tried to draw it in, but the strain was so great that the net began to break. But a little way from them was JAMES and JOHN, who came immediately to PETER's help. O, the multitude of fishes! The net was breaking; but eventually the catch was landed; and now both ships were deep in the water, and almost sinking with their burden. Where did the fish all come from? Were they in the spot at which they were taken at JESUS' command? What a reward only for lending his boat to the blessed Master, and that but for a single sermon! Such recompense for

such insignificant service! But though it was little, it was cheerfully done. And now, as PETER realized the situation, regardless of time and place, he cast himself at JESUS' feet, exclaiming:

"O LORD! depart from me; for I am a sinful man."

"Fear not," said JESUS, laying his hand upon him and raising him up; "henceforth thou shalt catch men."

JAMES and JOHN were as much amazed as PETER at the marvellous draught of fishes, and the effect upon them was so great, that when they had brought their boats ashore and had taken care of the fishes, they left all to follow JESUS. The words of JESUS were wonderful and inspiring; but his presence had upon them a still more magnetic influence. His power and love had encircled them as the net the fishes, and henceforth they were his captives, never permanently to leave him.

The Sabbath following this event was an unusually busy one for JESUS. He had taught in the synagogue, and before leaving it, had healed a man with an unclean spirit. When he reached the home of PETER, where he was to dine that day, he found PETER's wife's mother sick of a fever. Great was the distress; and glad were they to see JESUS, whom they begged to heal her. Going to the couch on which she reclined, he took her by the hand and lifted her up, the fever departing on the instant.

By this time the sun was low in the west; but the crowds of people at the door and in the street before the house, made it apparent that the work

of JESUS was not done for that day. He waited in the house; but the multitude grew larger, and their demands more urgent,

“We must see JESUS,” said they; and when he came out to them, O the sight that met his gaze!

It seemed that all the city had come bringing their sick with them. Sightless eyes were turned towards him beseechingly; ears unable to hear, and tongues that had never spoken, made signs of their affliction; the poor paralytic on his low couch stretched forth his hand to touch JESUS as he passed to heal another, and the mother with her deformed infant was there pushing her way through the crowd to get near him. The man writhing and twisting in his agony, whom they said was possessed with devils, was also brought by friends, and his moans and groans and curses made the good men shudder and turn away in dread.

The rich and the poor were there, all wanting something of JESUS, who made no distinction on account of social difference, but moved from sufferer to sufferer, touching first this one, then another, till he came to the last; laying his hand on blind eyes and deaf ears, raising up the lame, taking the sickly babe in his arms and blessing it, speaking peace to the troubled heart, and commanding the evil spirit to depart from the possessed. Nor was his work done till the stars were twinkling in the sky, and the moon was shedding her soft beams over the city. Hardly a home in that city but had cause for rejoicing that night.

“Said I not unto thee, ‘He is able’?” said a glad mother to her daughter, who had been cured.

“ Yes, dear mother; but I was afraid he would pass me, there were so many crying for his help; and my voice was so low, while others were calling loudly; beside not a few were noble and rich, and I was poor.”

‘ Ah, truly, my daughter, he taught us to-day in the synagogue, that the very hairs of our head are all numbered, and that not a sparrow falls to the ground without our heavenly FATHER’S notice: are we not much better than they?’

“ Verily, verily,” said the girl; now I can go to the synagogue, and hear him for myself. Only this morning I was reading from the Prophet ISAIAH, that ‘his name shall be called WONDERFUL;’ and how truly that is fulfilled! O, my soul doth magnify the LORD!”

In the morning, ere the city was awake from her slumbers, long before the day had begun, JESUS rose from his bed and went out into a solitary place to pray. It is not recorded where that place was: possibly it was some quiet nook by the edge of the lake, where only the twitter of the birds and the call of a few distant fishermen, as they toiled at their nets, broke the stillness of the surroundings. In this solitude, during the fresh morning hours, JESUS held communion with his FATHER. How sweet the secrets between him and the FATHER! Who can tell how near the angels came to him? or what the messages they brought him from Heaven? Only they who have themselves been alone with GOD, wrapped in close communion with him, so that hours have fled by unnoticed, can have any idea of those seasons of devotion.

CHAPTER V.

“You can make me well, if you only will,”

Said a leper, to CHRIST the LORD;

“I will; be thou clean!” he kindly replied;

And the man was cured by the word.

—*W. Kellaway.*

THE fame of JESUS was spreading in all directions. Even the lepers, in their mean little huts outside the cities, had heard of him, and talked among themselves of his wonderful works. Hardly, however, did they dare hope for personal benefit, so extreme was their condition; beside, it was forbidden to the people to approach them; hence no one came to say an encouraging word to them. Death was taking them away in a horrible manner, destroying them piece by piece. To-day they saw their fingers, or maybe their toes, hanging by a slender fibre, to drop off on the morrow. An arm or a foot was gone from some. With others, the nose or cheek was partly eaten away. Some had lost one or both their eyes. Thus in ghastly condition, objects repulsive to view, were they left to die, abandoned by friends and family.

Such was the condition of one poor man who heard of JESUS. He remembered the time when wife and children gathered around him, friends honored him, and neighbors opened their doors with gladness to receive him. Possibly wealth and

influence had been at his command; but now he was a beggar, and counted with the despised outcasts of the city.

If he could see JESUS, he thought how he would plead for health; how he would present his case before him. Strangers were constantly passing; perhaps JESUS might come some day. And surely he did! O, what a welcome sight! The eye, beaming so brightly, and the slow step, encouraged the poor leper; and forgetting the nicely framed sentences with which he had thought to plead his cause, he hobbles out of his miserable hut, and casting himself before the sympathetic Saviour, cries out:

“LORD, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.”

The disciples who were with JESUS instantly drew back; but he, coming still nearer, without fear of infection, stooped down, and touching the prostrate man, said:

“I will; be thou clean.”

A thrill came with that touch! The leper felt it; and the disciples were witnesses. Just as the tear-stains are wiped from the child's face, or as the snow melts from the mountain, so the leprosy departed, leaving his flesh as clean as though it had never known disease. The man leaped to his feet—the feet that had been useless so long—and clasped his hands together in an ecstasy of joy.

“What shall I render”—he was about to say, when JESUS commanded:

“See thou say nothing to any man; but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing the gift that MOSES commanded.”

But how could he keep still? JESUS had done so much for him. It was impossible for him to refrain from speaking about it. Hence instead of keeping silent, he published the news so widely that the Master had to withdraw from the city, on account of the envy of the Jews. But he went into other cities, there speaking gracious words and healing the sick, until the feast at Jerusalem.

Just outside the city's walls was the Pool of Bethesda, where many sick folk came, to be healed; and when JESUS was at the feast he resorted thither. It was said that at certain times an angel came down and agitated the water; and that the one who stepped in first was cured of whatsoever disease he had. Many brought their friends to the Pool, and when the water began to work strangely, they immediately helped the poor sick one in.

JESUS stood looking on, and his great heart was moved with pity. He saw the crowding down to be in position to get in first; he also saw the disappointment of those who until now had failed of the blessing. Some distance from where he stood, and a little on one side, lay a man on his mat, who had vainly attempted to get to the water's edge. For thirty-eight years he had been in this almost helpless condition; and since early morn that Sabbath day, before many others had come, he lay at the Pool. He had given up trying while the press was so great; for more than once had he been roughly pushed back, while the strong carried the weak into the troubled water. JESUS had seen it all; nothing escaped his observant eye;

and going to the sick man, he bent over him, tenderly saying:

“Wilt thou be made whole?”

The man looked startled, surprised that any one should be interested in him; but thinking that the Stranger might even help him into the Pool, his eye lighted up with sudden hope, as he said:

“Sir! I have no man when the water is troubled to put me into the Pool; but while I am coming another steppeth down before me.”

JESUS was more than a helper to him; he was a healer. The waters of Bethesda might disappoint the poor sufferer; so JESUS said:

“Take up thy bed and walk.”

The poor sick man had so long been in subjection and obedience to those who commanded him, that he never hesitated to obey the authoritative voice of this Stranger, and almost before he realized what he had done, he was standing on his feet. He looked down at his feet and ankles in a bewildered sort of way, when, recovering himself, he thought of his Benefactor, and raising his eyes expecting to see JESUS, he found he was gone. Half hesitatingly he took two or three steps forward—why, he could walk! Then back again! Truly, truly! this was no dream! Never thinking it was any more harm to carry his small mat on the Sabbath day, which had been his bed for so long, than it was to be at the Pool waiting to get in, he rolled it up, and walked into the city with it.

The rulers of the Jews, only too willing to find excuse for accusing JESUS, and rather expecting that he had healed this man, said:

“It is the Sabbath day, and it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.”

Astonished that he should be found fault with, and a little troubled, he answered:

“He that made me whole, the same said unto me, ‘Take up thy bed and walk.’”

“Who is he that said, ‘Take up thy bed and walk?’ they asked. But the man knew not who had healed him, until he went into the Temple, and there met JESUS again; and afterwards he told them, it was JESUS of Nazareth. From that time on their hatred was so intense that they sought ways to slay him.

The Jews were very strict in all outward forms and ceremonies. Their feasts, purifications, sacrifices and Sabbath days were severely observed. They were also very proud of their ancestry; and when JESUS came and reproved them for inward impurities, and denounced their pride, they sought to retaliate, and their jealousy and envy knew no bounds.

They wished for a deliverer; but he must be of high birth and reared in affluence; he must uphold wealth and national pride; he must extol their habits and customs; to sum up all in a word, he must be above the common people. Hence they were in no way ready to receive the meek and lowly Man whose disciples were fishermen; who wandered from city to city, always on foot; who associated with Samaritans and preached to the motley crowd by the seaside; who had no family distinction, save that his mother was one of the poorer daughters of the lineage of DAVID; and

who had no place to lay his head at night, except as hospitable persons would give him a welcome to their homes.

What was it to them that he claimed to be the SON OF GOD! or that angels came at his bidding! or that he spent whole nights in prayer! They had wilfully thrust from their minds the heavenly manifestation at the waters of Jordan, leaving it unanswered and unaccepted; and the miracles he did, they attributed to the working of Satan.

A few of the noble and learned believed on him; but his train of followers were the poor and disconsolate whose hearts he had healed; the sinful and notorious whose sins he had forgiven; the lame and blind and deaf ones whom he had cured; the lepers he had cleansed, and those out of whom he had cast unclean spirits—these made up the throng that loved him, ministered to him, and accepted him as LORD.

Among the more noble who received him, were two sisters and a brother, who dwelt in the little village of Bethany, not far from Jerusalem. Father and mother had died and left them orphans; but a threefold cord is not easily broken, and so love bound and held them together in unwavering trust and devotion.

Never had a fourth been received to their circle as JESUS was; but for him there was always a glad welcome. And it was indeed affecting to see the weary Man, after a fatiguing day spent in Jerusalem, wending his way across the little brook, up the hillside, over its summit to its eastward slope, where Bethany lay, nestled among the trees, in

the morning sun and evening shade, and where LAZARUS, MARTHA and MARY dwelt.

The climbing vines over the lattice, where birds sang and built their nests, and bees hummed among the flowers; the shadow of the protecting olive-tree; the quiet, home-like repose of the little cottage; and above all, the sweet, smiling faces of its inmates, made the place doubly dear to JESUS. While he partook of their hospitality he unfolded to them the mysteries of the kingdom, and told them many secrets that others, whose minds were less divinely illuminated, were not as yet ready to receive.

The garden of Gethsemane was another favorite resort of JESUS. The large protecting trees afforded a shady retreat and concealment from the crowds that seemingly gave him no rest; and more than once whole nights were passed by him in prayer in that secluded place.

The twelve apostles chosen, JESUS preached that longest of all his sermons, the Sermon on the Mount. It was unlike yet similar to the Law given from Sinai. Both were delivered at the beginning of a grand dispensation; one through MOSES, the saviour of Israel; the other through JESUS the Saviour of the world. But they differed in that MOSES' law commenced with "Thou shalt," and "Thou shalt not"; while JESUS' commenced with "Blessed." MOSES' law taught, "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth"; while JESUS said, "all things, whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." MOSES said: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine

enemy"; but JESUS said: "Love your enemies; bless them that curse you."

Most beautifully did JESUS teach the life of trust, using for his illustrations the lilies of the field, which though they neither toil nor spin, exceed in beauty SOLOMON arrayed in royal attire — proverbial for grandeur; and the birds of the air, which sow not nor reap, yet are fed by the GOD who made them.

The Apostles, whom he had just chosen to leave all to follow him, could well appreciate this; so also could the lepers, and the poor whom he had so recently healed; for many of them had no settled homes, nor certain means of support.

He also taught them to pray: to say, "Our FATHER!" They had rarely, if ever, thought of GOD before as "father"; and what sweetness came with the word! . He impressed upon them the great responsibility of being his followers. "Ye are the light of the world," and "Ye are the salt of the earth": thus he said. Light, which brings cheer, strength and beauty; and salt, which preserves and keeps: such are his disciples in this world, so dark with sorrow and so corrupt with sin. He taught them to aim at perfection of inward graces, that the good fruit might grow spontaneously. Thus did he inaugurate his gospel and implant his law — the law of love, trust, humility and inward purity.

No one who ever came to JESUS and asked any thing of him was denied. The rich and the poor; the Jew, the Samaritan and the Roman; the ruler and the servant, were all alike to him. He stooped

to touch the leper as readily and cheerfully as he healed the Nobleman's son. If favoritism was shown, it was shown to the poor. "Wilt thou be made whole?" he said to the friendless Jew lying at the Pool, whom he sought to save; while the influential Centurion sought for him, and begged him to heal his servant.

This Centurion was a worshipper of the true GOD, although a heathen by birth; but worshipping in the Temple, he was made to realize the "middle wall of partition" between himself and the true Jew. They could approach to the Holy Place, while he was forbidden to go farther than the Court of the Gentiles. Therefore, it was no wonder when his servant whom he loved was so sick, and all thought he must die, that he sent elders of the Jews to JESUS, thinking that it would be presumption in him, a Gentile, to approach the divine LORD; and that it would have more weight to secure him his petition. But when he saw JESUS coming to his house, he sent servants, saying:

"LORD, trouble not thyself: I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof; neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee; but say the word only, and my servant shall be healed."

He beautifully illustrated his meaning, as well as showed his faith, by bidding his servants say that he was a man of authority having soldiers at his command, and a word from him was sufficient. So he acknowledged that JESUS was LORD of the heavenly host, at whose command angels hasten to obey. Why come himself? why not send an angel to do his bidding? — "just speak the word"!

When JESUS heard these things he was greatly astonished, and turning around to those who followed him, said, in mingled admiration of the Roman officer and reproach of his own people:

“I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.”

“Go your way,” he said to the servants; “thy Master’s faith is rewarded.”

And when they reached home they found it even so; for the one who had been sick was entirely healed.

CHAPTER VI.

O desolate parent, who mourns a lost child,
Why wilt thou uncomforted be?
The AUTHOR OF LIFE will quicken thy dead,
And present him again unto thee.

—*W. Kellaway.*

PERHAPS never in the history of Jerusalem, and its surrounding villages, or in lovely Galilee, had joy been such a universal guest as now. Homes that had been shadowed by sickness so long, were made bright with health and strength. Darkened rooms and hushed voices had given way to glorious sunshine and merry laughter. The leper had returned to wife and children; the demoniac to father and mother. No longer were those terrible spasms dreaded; no longer were the lips taught to say "Unclean! Unclean!"

Death let go his icy hold, and stood back amazed. But being foiled in so many attempts, he sought other objects at which to hurl his cruel shaft; and selected among the rest a humble home in the village of Nain, where uninterruptedly he might give vent to his pent up wrath. Often had his unwelcome knock been heard, and not long before had he seized the husband and father as a victim for the dark, silent grave.

Only one son was left to the poor lone widow, and he was far away. Many years ago, in budding

manhood, he had left home to seek for better things among kindred dwelling in a strange country. In many ways he had been prospered; but now his heart yearned for its native clime, his eyes having long since been satisfied with sight-seeing. After his father's death, his mother had sent him a letter, telling him of her bereavement and loneliness.

"Come home," she had written him, "and comfort thy mother's few remaining years; for since thy father fell asleep, my days have been sad and lonely. I remember thy buoyant step, thy bright eye, and thy glad words; and without these sweet thoughts, and the knowledge that thou art still alive and carest for thy mother, my sorrow and desolation would break my heart.

"Beside all this, I would have thee hear the young prophet, Jesus of Nazareth. I saw one of his disciples not many days ago, and he said he would pass through our village, before he went up to Jerusalem again. Many signs and miracles are wrought by him; yet only a few of the rulers have accepted him as the Messiah: therefore I would have thee hear him, and tell me what thou thinkest of his claim."

This pathetic letter from his aged parent, and his own heart's longings, soon brought him home. The mother's eyes shone clearer after the first shower of tears, as she clasped him round the neck; and her heart beat lighter when its burden had rolled off on to the noble man at her side. But hardly had a month passed when her rent heart was again chilled with dread of approaching evil.

This last remaining son was surely dying, and all her sobs and pleadings could not wring from the monster Death one drop of pity. In less than four days, the hands that had always responded to her loving touch were folded for the grave. Never before had those ears refused to hear her voice, or those eyes to see her anguish; and when she followed her boy out of the house to the silent grave outside the city's walls, her heart was well nigh breaking.

As the funeral procession passed out of the gate, a larger throng was about to enter. JESUS was the all-absorbing thought of one throng, as the dead man was of the other: here life and death met. JESUS saw the bier, and the disconsolate mother, and stepping to her side said, as her beloved son was wont to say when he saw her tears:

“Weep not!”

“O, Sir! he was all I had left,” she sobbed, in reply.

JESUS knew it—dear, kind Saviour! and not waiting to hear more, he touched the bier. The men who bare it stopped, and laid it at his feet. JESUS gently threw back the pall, and taking the cold hand in his own, said, in a voice loud and penetrating, so that all heard it, rivetting them to the spot:

“Young man! I say unto thee, Arise!”

Instantly his eyes opened, and he sat up. JESUS still held his hand, and leading him to his mother, he gave him back to her embrace.

Could her joy be greater than her grief? Strange as it may sound, it was. Unsought and unexpected

was this manifestation of the Master's power: tears had a language that to him was more eloquent than words; he needed not to be asked.

He who will in some glad day make the earth to blossom as the rose, and will for ever hush the voice of crying and sighing, was now making bright spots in it which seemed like sparks of the coming glory. In the blackness of surrounding misery did they shine forth, as stars in the night—little rents in the clouds, where the glory shone through.

While JESUS was constantly working miracles for some one's else joy or comfort, we do not know that he exercised his supernatural power so much as once for his own needs. Among those who accepted him were several devout women, who ministered unto him of their substance.

The foremost, perhaps, in this work, was one MARY, who dwelt at Magdala. She felt she owed all she had to him; for she was greatly afflicted, and he had restored her to health and family. He met her one day in the highway, wild as a beast of the forest, with hair unkempt, clothing half-torn from her emaciated and sun-burned body, and eyes starting from their sockets: there she stood, possessed of seven devils. With one word JESUS had set her free from her wretched condition; and she had gone home to friends and family, and to be a mother to her children.

These whom he had healed were living witnesses of his power, and, like the pillars of stone which the Patriarchs and the Children of Israel set up in their wanderings, they dotted all the land of Palestine, monuments of God's mercy.

In his teachings, JESUS frequently took their ordinary occupations and daily habits for his illustrations.

“Behold, a sower went forth to sow,” he said; and how familiar that sight was to them! They had seen the seed fall on the rocks, among the thorns and by the wayside, as well as on good ground; and JESUS said it was just so with the seed he was sowing, and their hearts were like the ground. He brings to the mind of the sowers that the seed grows quietly and slowly; “first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear”: so his disciples who go forth bearing precious seed must be patient, and wait; for the reaping-time comes after many days.

He illustrates his own love by telling them about a lost sheep. The shepherd counts the sheep of his flock — only ninety-nine in the fold, when there should have been a hundred. Yes, surely, one is missing! He counts them again; he has made no mistake: So he leaves those in safety to seek the strayed sheep. Over the hill he goes; by the little brook where the flock drank and rested at noon-day; up through the tangled bushes; looks over and behind the rocks, constantly calling it by name; and after a long time he finds it. It had been held fast by the thorns. Tenderly he loosens their tenacious hold, so that the fleece be not torn; then lays it on his shoulders, and carries it home. Just so, he tells them, has he come to seek the lost one, bound and held by SATAN; and when he has found it, “there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and

nine just persons that need no repentance." And while he thus illustrates his love, he inspires hope in the heart of the strayed.

He tells them that the kingdom of heaven is like to treasure hid in a field, which a man finds, and sells all that he has to buy the field. He compares the world to the field, and in it he himself has found precious jewels, some hidden beneath the grassy mounds, some under the ocean's wave, some still in the dark meshes of sin, and some shining and sparkling bright; and for these he is willing to give up all he has, even life, that they might shine forth in his kingdom.

He also told them that, during his absence, destructive wolves would enter the fold, not sparing the flock, and that many would be put to death for his name's sake.

Notwithstanding these plain statements, they thought the kingdom of God would immediately appear; and one day fell to quarreling among themselves who should be greatest, and sit nearest him on his throne.

A beautiful child had been toddling about the room, while its busy mother was preparing the evening meal, and JESUS, who had come in from the garden, stooped down and picked up the little one. For some moments he amused it, carrying it to the door, where a beautifully plumaged bird was warbling forth its last soft tune before it flew to its nest; and to the window, where bright-colored flowers were blooming.

"Pretty, pretty!" said the child, and JESUS smiled tenderly upon it, while he stroked the

wavy hair of the little one, and lovingly kissed its forehead.

Bringing it to where his disciples sat grouped together discussing what position they should have in the kingdom, he stood it in their midst, and said:

“Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same shall be greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

CHAPTER VII.

The shrieking wind and boisterous sea
Obey at once the Master's will;
And our tumultuous passions sink
When JESUS speaks his "Peace! Be still!"
—*W. Kellaway.*

BEAUTIFUL Sea of Galilee! can it be that thy placid waters could ever frown and rage so fiercely with thy Master asleep on thy bosom? How often hast thou invited him to thy side; how often have thy curling waves kissed his feet; and now when he trusts thee thou betrayest him, and wouldst swallow him up in thy fury!

Night was coming on, and the little ships had been waiting for JESUS for some time, but still the multitude clung to him; so finally dismissing the people with a blessing, he stepped into a ship ready to pass over to the other side — to the country of the Gadarenes.

Wearied with his day's work, nature easily yielded to the peaceful rocking of the little boat, and JESUS fell asleep, his head resting on a pillow, while the gentle breeze touched lightly his tired brow, like a soft hand, soothingly. But these waters, so like the heart of man, are ever changing; and while they lulled him to sleep, a little later they gathered themselves together in a heap, and burst in wrath upon him.

The disciples felt the rising wind, and saw the raging billows; their little boats were tossed upon the foaming waves as a feather; and while they tugged hard at the oars, they made no headway at all. The hearts of the sturdy fishermen were naturally strong and fearless; but dread was creeping over those brave hearts now, as the water was filling their ship.

O, where was JESUS? He who was so thoughtful of others, would he now leave his own disciples to battle with the waves alone, and perhaps be buried beneath them? If he would only come and stand beside them, his presence would give them courage and cheer.

"Master, Master! we are sinking!" cries PETER, awakening him. "Carest thou not that we perish? O help!—save us!" he says, in anguish, as another wave burst upon them, and for a moment seemed as if it would bury them.

Not sorry that they had called him; but sorry that they were so fearful, and so doubted his loving care, he replied:

"O, ye of little faith! dost thou think I would sleep, if there was any real danger?" and arising at once, he spoke to the angry waves, saying, "Peace! Be still!" and immediately there was a great calm.

"What manner of Man is this?" they whispered in unconcealed astonishment one to another, as they witnessed the storm subside: "even the winds and the waves obey him!" So through the night their little boats sped swiftly on, and when morning dawned it found them safe at land.

What followed is best told in the words of JOHN, as he narrated it to LAZARUS, who dwelt at Bethany:

“We had brought our boats to land, and were making our way up the hill-side into the city. After that fierce night on the Sea, where JESUS so wonderfully stilled the raging winds and waters, we stood more in awe of him than before, realizing that he must indeed be the very SON OF GOD; so we walked on in quietness. PETER and JAMES were a little in advance, while I followed close at my Master’s side.

“Seemingly the path had not been trodden much of late, though I remember it had been one of the principal highways to the city. We were just passing one of those yawning tombs which is as a great mouth in the hill-side, when a Man, almost naked, burst upon us. O, how shall I ever forget that fierce, strange look, as he threw his arms wildly about, and with glaring eyes and piercing yells ran toward us!

“Apparently, he had at first only seen PETER and JAMES; but when his eyes caught sight of JESUS he stopped short. I drew close to our dear LORD, and looked to see if he was afraid; but he stood there, calm and serene, with eyes resting on the demoniac. I was about to speak, when the wild Man made a dart toward him, and threw himself at his feet, crying out, as if voicing the sentiments of another:

“‘What have I to do with thee, JESUS, thou SON of the Most High God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time? I beseech thee, I

adjure thee before GOD, that thou torment me not.'

" 'What is thy name?' asked JESUS.

" 'My name is LEGION; for we are many. But I beseech thee send us not out of the country, nor into the deep. Let us have some other abode, rather than the darkness of hell; suffer us to go into yonder herd of swine'; still spoke the man.

" 'I say unto thee, Go!' said JESUS.

"One more spasm of agony and distortion of features and he was left like one dead. As soon as the Man came to himself the swine seemed filled with sudden madness, rushing hither and thither, with foaming mouths, until the keepers ran away, in alarm. Then, as if seized with one common impulse, the entire herd of two thousand ran, snorting and barking, down the hill-side, plunged into the sea, and were drowned.

"The poor unclothed man looked with shame upon his scarred and torn body; but PETER immediately wrapped his cloak about him, while I ran back to the boat for some clothing we had left there that day.

"Meanwhile the keepers of the swine had fled into the city and told what had happened, and it seemed as if the entire city came out, so great was the multitude. They stood a little back from our blessed Master, fearing him, lest he might do them harm, and destroy them, as they thought he had the swine.

"How little they knew my LORD! 'A bruised reed will he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench,' said the Prophet ISAIAH, of him. I have seen him look with sad, pitying eyes upon

the innocent doves and lambs about to be sacrificed in the Temple, and when the priest would plunge the knife into the fast-beating heart, he would turn away his head and groan.

“‘Ah!’ he was heard to say ‘God will prepare another lamb. It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin.’ And then he looked up, as if he himself were the victim for the altar.

“And one day, in journeying, we stopped to rest at noontide and partake of a slight repast under the shade of a large olive-tree. While we were reclining, a little sparrow fell fluttering at our feet, as if wounded and about to die. JESUS reached out his hand and picked up the gasping bird — O, so tenderly! — and turning to us he said:

“Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings?”

“Yea, LORD;” we replied.

“And not one of them shall fall to the ground without your FATHER’s notice: fear not, therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows.”

We always loved to hear him say, ‘Fear not’: somehow it made us feel as a frightened child fast folded in its mother’s arms — protected and safe.

And that ever-to-be-remembered day when he sat with a poor man at his feet, telling him, as he had previously told us, that he was ‘sent to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty them that are bruised’ — I thought, How can any one fear my dear LORD? and especially, how beseech him to depart from them, as the Gadarenes once did?

“I mourn for them, most noble LAZARUS; for when we left their coast, at their request, with JESUS, it seemed a great light and blessing was being taken from them. So truly did JESUS long for them, that when the man who was healed knelt before him and begged to go with him, JESUS said:

“‘Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the LORD hath done for thee; and hath had compassion on thee.’

“It may be that he will be invited back; for I hear that since we departed the man hath published throughout Decapolis the wonderful works of JESUS, and all men marvel.”

The Sea of Galilee was all smiles and dimples when it bore its LORD once more to Capernaum, and the shore was lined with people to welcome him back.

While on one shore JESUS was not received, there was a home on the other where eyes were eagerly looking for him. Messengers had been sent to PETER’S house, enquiring for him; but they were told that he had gone over the Lake to the other side, and had not returned.

“Haste thee to the Lake and watch for him; and when he cometh bring me word;” said the Ruler to his servants: then he goes back to the sick room to wait.

This man was one of the rulers sent by the Centurion to JESUS in behalf of his servant; and he had seen the wonderful cure performed by CHRIST. But it is very different interceding for another’s relief, from having our own agony as the burden of our prayers.

Now the Ruler's only child, a little girl, is hopelessly ill, and it seemed that no grief was like its parents'. They had only the one—must they give her up? And they were so able to lavish every gift upon her! Why could not Death be content to take a child from a poorer family, where there were many mouths to feed and barely enough bread to go round? Beside, she had been such a comfort to them, and others! Why must she die, and many sinful outcasts be allowed to live out the full number of their days?

Already the mourners were gathering around her, and the poor little sufferer, reared as a tender plant and sheltered from every stormy wind, was fast letting go her feeble hold on life. Just then hurried footsteps were heard outside the door, and a servant, nearly breathless, announces to the anxious father:

"The Master has come, and is now dining with MATTHEW, the publican."

Without considering for a moment the fitness of entering a publican's house—thinking only of JESUS and his own sick child—he rushes off. It is not hard to find the house, for a crowd surrounds the gate, and many scribes and Pharisees have come to watch, that they may seize on something to accuse him of. The Ruler hardly thinks of them, or stops to wonder what they think of him, as he touches a disciple on the shoulder, and anxiously enquires:

"Where is the Master?"

"Come!" said the disciple; and he led him in to JESUS, who was still reclining at the feast.

"O, JESUS, LORD! I pray thee: come and lay thy hands upon my little daughter, that she may be healed; for she lieth at the point of death — perchance is even now dead. But come, I beseech thee;" said the sorrowing father, still remaining prostrate before the Master.

As he rose to go, his disciples, and many of the guests, followed him; but as he was passing through the door he stopped, and turned around.

"Come!" said the anxious father, laying his hand upon him, as if to hasten him; but JESUS, without heeding the Ruler's urgency, asked:

"Who touched my clothes?"

"Why, Master!" said PETER, "the throng is great, and press thee in their desire to go with thee; and why askest thou "Who touched me?"

"Some one hath touched me; for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me," was CHRIST's reply.

There was a momentary pause; then a woman, close to him, fell at his feet, and confessed, with fear of evil consequences, that she was the party.

"I touched thee, Master! but have mercy upon me; for I said in my heart: 'If I may but touch the hem of his garment, I shall be healed;' and immediately I felt in my body that I was every whit whole;" said she.

"Daughter! be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole: go in peace, and be healed of thy plague."

Ah! that "go in peace," how much it meant to her! It was more than the healing of her body; for now she had also the blessing of his salvation. For twelve long years she had been plagued,

shunned by society, and kept from the Temple of GOD. All her living had been spent upon many physicians, and her prospect was the cheerless one of more dark days in store; but JESUS had stopped by the way to heal her! Stopped as he was going to heal another! How often as he was on his way into the city, or going to be a guest, did he tarry a moment to bind up some broken heart, or bend his ear to hear some one's "O LORD, help!"

Sowing by the way — teaching and healing by the way: as he was going he did the good.

But that anxious father — how impatiently did he wait! And when a servant came saying: "Trouble not the Master, thy daughter is dead;" he turned and looked so hopelessly at JESUS.

"Be not afraid; only believe, and she shall be whole;" he said, as he followed the Ruler to his house.

There was no need for haste now: JESUS might take his time.

As they entered the splendid home, where costly tapestries and ornaments brought from afar were hung, loud was the voice of mourning. It was not fit that such wailing should be in the chamber of death; so putting all out except the father and mother, and beckoning to PETER, JAMES and JOHN to come in, he stepped to the couch where the child lay.

Death had left upon her no ghastly look; but she lay there beautiful and still, like a lily broken from its stem. JESUS threw aside the light cover; and taking the little slender hand in his own, he said, as if speaking to one asleep:

“Maid! I say unto thee, Arise!”

Just as when a child awakes on a bright morning in the glow of health, so did she open her eyes, and look upon this Stranger. And are not all these little ones — all these beloved ones — only “asleep” to JESUS? He will speak to them in the morning of the resurrection, and they will rise from their dusty beds, as joyful as the bird from its nest as it soars aloft, singing a sweet carol to the coming king of day. And happy the mother who may be near to receive her treasure once more!

CHAPTER VIII.

'Tis nothing that we sleep in death,
With folded arms and curtained eyes;
Our hope is in the One who said:
"Maiden! I say to thee, Arise!"

— *W. Kellaway.*

THE winter months of the second year of the ministry of JESUS passed much as those before. During that time the twelve Apostles had been journeying from city to city, preaching the gospel and healing the sick, as their Master bade them. He had sent them forth, two by two, as sheep in the midst of wolves.

"Be ye, therefore, wise as serpents, and harmless as doves;" said he.

Their message was a glad one; for he told them to say: "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand;" and to many it sounded like the welcome shout of jubilee. Redemption was the key-note; and the strains rose higher and higher, till it seemed that the angels in heaven took up the glad refrain. But the masses rejected the sweet message; and when the Apostles again returned to JESUS, disappointment and surprise were strangely mingled: surprise that they, too, had the power to heal, and disappointment that all did not receive the gospel.

O, what a conference that first meeting with JESUS, upon their return from their missionary tour!

He well knew the heart's deep feeling that caused the light and shade to flit across their faces as they told their experience.

"The disciple is not above his Master; nor the servant above his LORD: but, fear not!" he would say, as they recounted their trials.

About this time JOHN THE BAPTIZER was beheaded, to satisfy the cruel hatred of HEROD'S wife. JESUS and JOHN were second cousins; and beside the natural tie, there existed a still stronger bond of affection. JOHN had been sent of GOD to prepare the way for JESUS: and he had proved faithful unto death; so, after the lifeless body was taken from the dark prison cell, and tenderly buried by his loving disciples, they came and told JESUS.

"Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest awhile," he said; for there were so many coming and going that they did not have time to take needed rest. So they entered into a ship, and passed over to the other side. They steered a little out of their usual course, and brought their boats to land in a secluded spot, where the fresh green grass made a pretty fringe for the water's edge.

"Knowest thou whither the Master goeth?" said an old man, to one whose name was SAUL, as they saw him depart.

"He goeth to a desert place, near to the city of Bethsaida, I see, by the course they are taking," said the other, as he shaded his eyes with his hand, and gazed squintingly over the shining waters.

"Let us go also, that we may hear more of the mysteries of the kingdom."

"Dost thou believe," said SAUL, that this Man, who is the son of JOSEPH, is the Messiah who should come to redeem Israel?"

"We must believe him, for his works' sake;" answered the old man.

"Shall CHRIST come out of Galilee?" still questioned the other. "Do not the Prophets teach that CHRIST cometh from Bethlehem, the city of his father DAVID?"

"Verily; and so JESUS was born in Bethlehem of Judea, NICODEMUS saith, who hath searched to see if these things be true;" said the old man, triumphantly.

"If he were of GOD he would keep the Sabbath;" said the young man, apparently taking no notice of the last reply.

"But doth not our Law teach that it is right to do good on the Sabbath day?"

"Thou also art deceived; and I fear that which will befall our nation, if this Man continueth long among us."

"I am not deceived; but speak forth the things I have seen and heard; and my witness is true;" the old man said stoutly; and continued: "It may be thou hast seen my son that was blind, who dwelleth near to JAIRUS' house. Many months ago he was stricken down with a fever; and while he sought to go on with his work, before he fully recovered, his eyes grew dim. For some time he spent the most of his living on physicians; but he grew worse, until he became blind. After that, life was a burden; and he wandered aimlessly about the house, thinking GOD had forsaken him.

He was too old to be taught those things that bring a living to other blind men, and he was ashamed to beg.

The followers of JESUS, especially one whose name was PETER, had often besought him to go to the young Prophet who healed so many others; but his eye of faith was as dark as his natural eye, until that wonderful day when the Ruler's little daughter was restored to life.

Ah! those blue eyes, and that hair of gold in which the sunbeams loved to play! And the childish prattle, how it was wont to cheer my poor old heart! And to my son, whose home was bereft of all its little ones, she was as an angel of light. The light of day could not enter those darkened eyes; but her merry laughter, and sweet songs of DAVID, cast a flood of sunshine into his heart, lest that too should become seared. But when she died our hearts were like to break; for we heard the mourners' wail, and we, likewise, smote upon our breasts, saying: 'Would God we had died for her.'

'Hark! what meaneth those glad shouts?' said my son, as he heard the praises of the passing multitude.

" 'Why! the child that was dead has been restored to her parents!' said one; 'JESUS of Nazareth laid his hands on her, and she came to life.'

" 'Why dost thou go with those blind eyes, when thou couldest have thy sight for the asking?' said another, stopping for a moment.

" 'Where is he? I will go to him; and come thou also;' said my son, holding out his hand to

another who was also blind, and lodged with him. 'Come! let us go to the Prophet; for surely, one that raiseth the dead must be of God, and can also open our eyes that we may see;' he said, with increasing faith.

" 'Thou Son of DAVID! have mercy upon us;' they cried, approaching JESUS; and as he went into a house, they followed him.

" 'Dost thou believe I am able to do this?' he asked, turning to them.

" 'Yea, LORD;' was their reply.

"Raising his hand to their eyes, and gently lifting the lids, he said:

" 'According to your faith, be it unto you.'

"Immediately their eyes were opened, and they saw JESUS. Ah, friend! such praises thou didst never hear. Shouts and tears of joy mingled like mixed spices.

" 'O, that my brother was only here!' said the companion of my son, with a touch of sadness in his voice; for many, many years he hath been plagued, and he is a reproach to our family.'

" 'Let us make haste to bring him.' So he was brought—a dumb man, possessed with a devil. They laid him at the feet of JESUS; and in that hour he was healed."

Stopping for a moment to breathe (for the hasty walk, together with the story he had poured into the young man's ears had nearly exhausted him), he looked inquiringly into SAUL'S face, and earnestly asked:

"When CHRIST cometh, will he do more miracles than this Man doeth?"

"He casteth out devils through BEELZEBUB, the prince of devils;" said a Pharisee, haughtily, who chanced to hear the last part of the story, with its closing question.

The old man, undaunted, was about to reply, when they became separated in the crowd, and each went his way.

Nestled in between two small hills lay the little plain, basking in the soft sunshine of early Spring. The gentle breeze played with the tall grass, and the bright flowers bowed to each as gracefully as did ever lords and ladies in a banqueting hall. The silvery shore separated the blue waves, with their white foaming edges, from the green turf: while on the hill-sides stood a few spreading trees like sentinels, in whose branches birds sang and built their nests. This was the place that JESUS sought for repose.

O, weary gleaner! JESUS would have thee rest with him, away from the city's loud bustle; he would talk with thee alone; and the secret of his presence is so sweet! Art thou sorrowing because all the world is shut out, and a great gulf lies between thee and thy friends? Cheer thee, drooping heart! it may be that JESUS hath brought thee to this desert place to whisper some secrets of his love to thee.

The little boat had hardly come in sight of this quiet nook, when PETER said: "Master! behold the multitudes wait for thee on the shore!"

True enough; there they were, hundreds of persons, all gazing to see if the disciples were going to bring their ships to land at that place. A strong

wind had delayed the little company, so the people had outrun them, and were waiting to receive them. JESUS looked upon them in sadness. He was disappointed that he could find no rest; but pleased that they had sought him at such inconvenience to themselves.

"They are as sheep not having a shepherd," he said, and going up on the hill-side, he sat down with his disciples, and taught them.

The shadows had already begun to lengthen and the sun was sinking low in the west; but still they lingered. All day they had been with JESUS and had eaten nothing; and the disciples being worn and weary, and fearing that the great multitude might be benighted in that lonely place, without food, said to JESUS:

"Master! the day is far spent, and they have nothing to eat; send them away, therefore, that they may buy for themselves."

"They need not depart; give ye them to eat;" he replied.

JESUS knew full well the laws of courtesy and hospitality, and he would not have his guests return home without refreshment. By common consent of the Twelve, and his own thoughtful disposition, to PHILIP had been left the care for the other disciples. JUDAS carried the little leathern bag, that contained all the money they had in common; but generally it was a very small amount, so that their living was always of the coarsest, plainest kind. At this time it was more scanty than usual — only five loaves and two small fishes were left in the basket, not enough to supply their own needs.

"Bring them to me, and make the people sit down;" said JESUS.

"Why, Master! what are these among so many? nevertheless we will do as thou hast bidden us;" said PHILIP.

Then began the work of seating them in little groups of fifties and hundreds.

"What wouldst thou have us do?" asked the astonished people, as the disciples bade them sit down.

"The Master will tell thee;" was the answer.

"Will he command bread from heaven, as MOSES did?"

"Perhaps the ravens will bring us food at his bidding, as they did ELIJAH."

"He will surely do us good, and not evil;" said one who had been healed that day.

"Truly, the maid hath said aright;" responded an old man. "Behold my arm hath hung by my side, lo! these many years, until it was withered to half its size; now I can stretch it forth like the other. I rejoice to see this day; and surely, this man is no other than the CHRIST of GOD."

"He hath done marvellous things, and that my soul knoweth right well;" said the girl.

"Hush! he prayeth;" said some one in the company; and at that the old man and maid for whom so much had been done bowed their heads in adoration.

We wonder whether the busy disciples noticed the beautiful sight before them. The numerous little companies, with their head-dresses, and robes of blue, grey, black, yellow and red, with a small

dotting of the more expensive scarlet and purple, formed a good contrast for the rich green grass on which they sat, intermingled with the bright Spring flowers. Nor was the hum of soft voices unlike sweet melody, as it rose and fell on the evening wind. The setting sun threw a mellow tint over all. And this was the LORD's entertainment: he was the host and they the guests, the disciples acting as servants!

Each took a little basket filled from their LORD's hand, with bread and fish; and although he kept breaking and supplying each basket as fast as it was emptied, there was still plenty to break. The astonished disciples gave to the more astonished multitude. How good it tasted, as the fresh sea-air sharpened their appetites; and they all ate with a keen relish. But how did the food come?

It reminded them of the widow's cruise of oil and barrel of meal, that failed not, in the days of ELIJAH. Surely, a greater than ELIJAH was here; for had not all the signs and wonders of the days of their fathers been repeated by him! After all that great multitude of over five thousand had eaten and were satisfied, JESUS said: "Gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost;" and they filled twelve baskets. O, wonderful!

"This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world," said some; while others cried in their enthusiasm: "Let us make him king!"

This was precisely what the disciples wanted, and most zealously did they urge the matter on; till JESUS, who knew their desires, and fearing that

they might attempt to take him by force and proclaim him king, begged them to take ship and return to their homes, while he would send the multitude away. Reluctantly they obeyed him; and when he was left alone he went still higher up the hill-side, and there communed with God.

The little ships had not gone far on their way before the waves began to toss and churn. Steadily they plied the oars; but the wind was contrary, and their little barks were in great danger. O, such darkness! And it was only when flashes of lightning chased each other across the sky that they could see one another's faces. Loud peals of thunder almost deafened them; and the waves, running mountains high, bore them on their crests, and threatened at times to swallow them up in their fury.

Drenched with the water, and chilled with the wind, they sighed for JESUS. And he on the land was not unmindful of them. Far up in the mountain, alone with GOD, he looked over the stormy sea, and saw them struggling and toiling with the wind and waves. Poor helpless children!

Communion with the FATHER was sweet: often when misunderstood and unappreciated by his own, whom he came to save, even his own mother and brethren thinking him beside himself, he turns to GOD.

Born to be a king; to associate with angels; to reign where all is love and righteousness, his heart often yearned for heavenly companionship, and sighed over the sins and unbelief of his professed followers.

“I am from above; I am not of this world,” he once said; and you who have been far from home, among strange people, away from all that is congenial to your longing souls, can in a faint way understand how he, the SON OF GOD, felt.

Perhaps those sweet hours of holy communion were a little like the letters that come from friends at home, bearing messages of love and assurance that the absent one is still remembered. O, how hard it is, when in the rapture of reading such a letter, to be called away to listen to some tale of woe, or to comfort some sorrowing heart, leaving the letter unfinished; but if our love for the sad one is strong, we quickly hasten to his help.

Just so did JESUS leave the holy joy of those midnight hours to speak comfort to his weary disciples, battling with the storm. In the glimmering dawn of that early morning he came to them, walking upon the sea; but knowing their fright would be intensified at seeing one walk upon the waves, he appeared to pass them.

“O, see, see! a Spirit! Behold, he cometh upon us!” cried one. “Have mercy, O God! O God, save us!” and the poor frightened men would have dropped their oars and have plunged into the foaming sea, had not a voice come to them above the roar of the storm.

“It is I; be not afraid”—ah! it was JESUS.

“O LORD! if it be thou, bid me come to thee on the waters;” said the ardent PETER, just as a child wants to run and meet a long absent but now returning parent; or a freed captive would throw himself at the feet of his redeemer.

"Come!" said JESUS; and he stepped out upon the waters. O, how angry they looked! and what a great gap between him and his LORD! Another second and a huge wave hid JESUS from him. He stopped; looked down at the seething billows, which boiled and foamed around him like a whirlpool, and then began to sink.

"O, LORD! save me;" he cried out, in sudden alarm; when immediately he felt a strong hand lift him up.

"Wherefore didst thou doubt?" said JESUS.

"The waves looked so angry; and I lost sight of thee;" he would have said, had he spoken at all, for that is what he thought; but now they were safe in the boat, and the sea was placid.

Another long toilsome day is gone; another sleepless night has passed; and a new day is entered by the SON OF GOD. On, on he goes, preaching, teaching, healing; bearing the griefs and carrying the sorrows of the poor and oppressed; shunning the praise of men, and refusing their honors.

CHAPTER IX.

Ah! Gift of the Father; true Bread from above;
Provided for me — even me:
I eat of the Manna, and hunger no more!
My fulness I find, LORD, in thee.

— *W. Kellaway.*

SOME one may say, skeptically, as he reads the wonders of CHRIST's life: "These things could never be; they are contrary to nature." True; to us, they are not in harmony with our laws of nature; but to the GOD who made nature, it is not surprising if he could and did change the tide of circumstances with as much ease as we can move the hands of a clock, backward or forward.

A fable is told of a fish that one day found a small dark thing in the bottom of the ocean. He followed it for some distance, until it seemed endless. Being surprised at such a discovery, he called a conference of all the fishes, to discuss what this thing might be. All sorts of opinions were given; and at last one fish, who was older than the others, said:

"My Dear Friends! we must not think that our marine world is the only world there is; nor that our laws are the only laws; nor that our nature is the only nature.

"Far above us, and on either side of us, is another universe; and those who live there are

called 'men'; and they walk upright, and breathe air. They talk a language that we do not understand; and sometimes they fly across our world in huge things called 'vessels.' They have been known to put on something which makes them look a little like a fish, and come down to explore our world; and they can lift rocks with one hand which are so large that any number of us could not move.

"They do many wonderful things, that you would not believe if I should tell you. But among the most wonderful of their inventions is this cable, which connects one continent with another. Through this they speak to one another, though thousands of miles apart. Indeed, so fast do these messages go, that they can span the distance in a few minutes which it would take one of those vessels I told you of a great many days to cover."

"Put him out! put him out!" cried all, in a breath.

"The idea of believing that there is any world but this."

"Just as though he could make us believe that yonder rock, which stands like a mountain, and where many of us dwell, could ever be moved out of its place. That would be a miracle; and not according to nature."

With that the assembly broke up in confusion; and always after, that fish which had narrated these wonderful things was regarded as a fanatic, and was not admitted into their scientific circles.

So do many regard the miracles of our LORD; not believing that there is another world where angels dwell, and where GOD reigns; whose way

and thoughts are higher than ours, as the heavens are higher than the earth.

No miracle that our LORD ever did had a mightier effect than the feeding of the five thousand; and the next day the multitude sought him again.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me not because ye saw the miracle; but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled;" said JESUS, reading their hearts, and knowing that the same motive that prompted them to seek him now, prompted them to desire to proclaim him king the day before.

"Labor not for that meat which perisheth; but for that which endureth unto life everlasting;" he continued.

"What shall we do that we may work the works of God?" they enquired.

"This is the work of GOD, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent;" he answered.

"What sign showest thou, then, that we may believe on thee?" said a Pharisee, disregarding all the miracles and wonders that he had wrought.

"Our fathers did eat manna in the desert: what dost thou work?" still he continued, wishing to dishonor him in the eyes of his disciples, and of those disposed to believe on him.

But JESUS never displayed his wonder-working power to satisfy the idle curiosity of the unsympathetic, so he said:

"MOSES gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven: I am that bread."

“Is not this JESUS the son of JOSEPH, whose father we know? How is it, then, that he saith, ‘I came down from heaven?’ they asked, scoffing and wagging their heads.

They knew full well that he was the SON of GOD, therefore of heavenly origin; so, without answering their questions, JESUS followed on with the figure of speech, saying;

“As the living FATHER hath sent me, and I live by the FATHER; so he that eateth me, shall live by me. He that eateth of this bread shall live forever.”

“Surely, he is beside himself: the sleepless nights and toilsome days wear upon him;” said some of his own disciples. “Let us go no more with him, lest he bring reproach upon us and our children;” and with that they left him.

The day before they would have made him a king; now they turn from him and follow him no more. He saw their doubtful looks as they whispered together, and the shake of their heads; saw them turn and leave the little company that stood around him; he watched it all with sad eyes: and turning to his Apostles, he said, so sorrowfully:

“Will ye also go away?”

“LORD! to whom shall we go? we believe, and are sure, that thou art the CHRIST, the Son of the living GOD;” said PETER, warmly.

O, PETER! thou hast made many mistakes before; thine impetuosity has brought thee into some trouble; but we love thy warm, sympathetic heart! While thou wast first to step out upon the water to go to JESUS, and by thine unbelief brought

shame upon thyself; now thou art the first to acknowledge him as the SON OF GOD!

Weary and worn by the eagerness of the multitude, which followed him almost day and night — despite the skepticism and cruel anger of the Jews — he desired rest and retirement; so, with his Apostles, he went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and was the guest of a friend. But the news of his whereabouts spread.

“A great Prophet, a Master in Israel, and some say, the long looked-for MESSIAH of that nation, has come into our country, and lodgeth with one who is a friend of the Centurion who dwelleth at Capernaum, whose servant he healed;” said one to another.

Such news came to the ears of a woman who had a sick child — a young and beautiful daughter. “O, could he, would he heal my child?” was her thought.

“Daughter! I am going to beseech the Prophet JESUS, of Nazareth, to heal thee;” said she, after some hours. “Stay thou here; the walk is too long and rough for thee. I will go alone; it may be that he will hear my prayer and show mercy.”

“O, mother! I am afraid.”

“Afraid of what? my child.”

“Afraid he will refuse thee; for he has come here to rest. And beside, the Jews count us but dogs.”

“I can lose nothing by going and asking him: fear not!”

O, the anxious longing! She knew JESUS could, but would he? Hope ran high; then sank again;

like the waves of the sea, in storm and calm. If she were a Jew she would have no doubt; but yet she felt that this Man was not like other Jews she had known — she would never dare ask a favor of them. Her heart was beating almost as loudly as her timid knock at the gate, when she reached the house; but when she saw JESUS, her longing for her sick daughter was nearly desperate, and forgetting all her fears, she threw herself at his feet.

“O, JESUS! thou PROPHET OF GOD! I beseech thee, heal my child.”

“Let the children first be filled;” he said: “It is not meet to take the children’s bread and give it to the dogs.”

“Yea, LORD; but the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs;” she replied, eagerly.

“O, Woman! great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt.” Her importunity and faith had conquered, and he laid down the blessing at her feet.

“He said so; he said so! I do believe! O, it is wonderful!” she exclaimed, as she hurried home. Heart anguish all gone, care rolled away, she went trippingly along, and met her daughter at the door.

“Thou art healed, my child; he said so.”

“Thou speakest truth, mother. As I sat in the chair I felt a thrill go through me, and I was well. O, yes; I know I am cured.”

“We will return to him to-morrow, and thou canst thank him for thyself. Probably he will abide some days with us; for I hear that the Jews reject him, and he seeketh retirement from them.”

But JESUS could not remain long away from the sick and sorrowing multitude who sought him day and night. Like a mother who sighs for rest as she bends over her suffering babe that she has nursed for weeks, so did he long for rest; but as she also who has hardly left the sick room and the little crib for any time feels she must return, so he hastens back to the aid of the oppressed and the disconsolate. Their cries still rang in his ears, and their tears were ever before him.

“I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; for the night cometh when no man can work;” he said. So taking leave of his kind host, he departed with his disciples for the Sea of Galilee, by the way of Decapolis.

As he entered those regions he was not forgetful of the last time he was there: how the poor demoniac was healed; and how the citizens of that country besought him to depart from them: but now he is simply passing through.

The man who was healed had gone home to wife, children and friends. Such a change had been wrought in him; but — would it last? For all these months the people had watched him; some feared him; and even his wife looked upon him with suspicion, for the first few weeks. His children, trembling with fear, ran and hid when they saw him coming. Poor little ones! they could only remember their father as a fierce madman; and had been taught to speak his name in subdued tones and with dread. And how many times the finger of scorn had been pointed at them, and they had heard child whisper to child, while heads

nodded in their direction: "Their father is a mad man." And now that same father had come home; and for many days, yes, even weeks, they feared him, lest he was not really healed, and should break out again in unreason and fury.

"Little children!" was his word, "fear not; JESUS has healed me."

Timidly they would look towards him, and unconsciously shrink from him as he put out his hand to lay it upon their heads. But children soon forget; and it was not very long before his step and voice were pleasant to them, and they clambered into his lap, toyed with his hands and clothing, and told him their childish stories—until the house was once more filled with mirth and laughter.

The startled and sad look had gone from his wife's eyes; her sunken and pale cheeks had taken on the bloom of health; cheer and gladness had made her voice natural and sweet; so that the husband and father, again blessed with the confiding love of his family, had become happy and strong; all because JESUS had met him in the high-way and had spoken peace to his soul.

Nor was the surrounding country unmindful of this wonderful cure. For miles and miles it was told; so that now, when JESUS was passing through, multitudes gathered around him, bringing their sick with them.

Among the many who came was one deaf and dumb. In early childhood sickness had closed his ears, and he had never learned to speak, except to say the few baby-words of infancy. Doctors had

tried with instruments and medicines to open the closed doors; but still all the sweet melody of the glad world was shut out, as well as the sorrow and crying of the afflicted.

"O, JESUS! just lay thy hands upon him," said the father, as with one hand he arrested the attention of the Master, and with the other he led the boy.

For a moment his eyes fell upon the poor unfortunate lad, and then he sighed. Sighed as he thought of the many who were more anxious about their physical than their spiritual well-being. Sighed as he thought of thousands of afflicted homes. Sighed as he wondered who would be a shepherd to them when he was gone — poor, needy sheep!

Although naturally bright, the lad had become nearly idiotic in the long years of silence incident to his troubles; and JESUS, wishing to excite the drowsy brain, and kindle a flame of expectancy there, took him by the same hand that the father held, and led him a little aside from the gazing throng. Moistening his fingers with his own spittle, he touched the young man's tongue, and then put them into his ears.

"Be opened!" he said; and instantly the air that had hitherto borne no meaning to him, became laden with the hum and murmur of thousands of sounds and voices. And he understood them all, and could converse intelligently, as well.

"Behold!" said the astonished disciples, "he needeth no man to teach him! We never saw it on this wise before; for while one may hear, he

must be taught to talk; but this man both understandeth and speaketh, having never heard."

O, how much there was to hear and tell when he returned home! Father, mother, sisters and brothers, all talking at once! Around him the whole family, trying to tell him, as in an hour, the events of a life-time, and how they sympathized with him in his darkness and deafness. Praises and exclamations followed each other like the waves, all in honor of the name of JESUS.

"He doeth all things well;" one said. And many a home in that country echoed the same eulogium.

No one thought of asking him to depart from them now; but multitudes sought him, as with his disciples he sat outside the city, on a mount. Some came for miles to see and hear him; and expecting to soon return home, brought little food for their needs; and that little had been shared by friends, until there was but a scant supply on hand; while to others nothing remained. So they continued three days, unwilling to leave JESUS even for the necessities of life, so earnest were they.

"I have compassion upon the multitude;" said JESUS, to his disciples. "Behold, they have been with me these three days, and now have nothing to eat. If I send them away fasting, they may faint by the way: let us give them food."

"From whence can a man satisfy these men with bread, here in the wilderness?" said the disciples; realizing that no human power was equal to the necessity, but not presuming to suggest to him the working of a miracle.

At his bidding they counted over the little store—seven loaves and a few small fishes. Taking them, he gave thanks, and then gave to his disciples to set before the hungry people. Over four thousand persons were fed from this small provision; and, beside every one having enough, seven baskets full of broken bits were gathered up!

CHAPTER X.

“We shall be like him”—JESUS, dear!
Shall share the glory of the Mount;
Shall say: “How good to dwell with thee!”
And sing of Calv’ry’s cleansing fount.

—*W. Kellaway.*

TIME was now swiftly passing, yet JESUS made no effort to restore the kingdom to Israel; on the contrary, he was constantly withdrawing from the multitudes who were desirous of proclaiming him their prince.

Summer was fully upon them, and JESUS had made an extensive tour through Decapolis, and into the borders of Tyre and Sidon. Now he had come back to the beautiful, yet treacherous Sea of Galilee.

Weary and worn with travelling over rough and dusty hill-sides, his feet often blistered, and his lips sometimes parched with thirst; battling constantly with the rude derision and scoffs of the opposing Scribes and Pharisees; surrounded by day and sometimes far into the night by the eager, imploring throng, whose groans and sighs made the heart heavy—all these rendered the Sea of Galilee, with its cooling waves, quiet retreats and wooded shores, one of the most inviting and loveliest spots on earth to the worn Saviour. The little birds chirruping among the trees by the Sea,

where they built their nests, as they picked up the spicy seeds, or at night tucked their head under a wing and with one little foot drawn up into the soft warm feathers went fast asleep on the swaying bough, brought to mind his FATHER's care. These things were all so sweet; and he, too, would draw his mantle about him, and lie down under the shading tree; while the soft murmur of the waves and the gentle rustle of the leaves coaxed him to sleep.

Did any one think he had need of rest or comfort? True, he was beset with admirers; but the vacillating crowd that one day worshipped him as the Sent of GOD, the next day nodded their heads approvingly, as some lordly Pharisee, drawing his robes about him, insultingly plied him with malicious questions.

And SIMON, although he invited him to dine, did not offer him the courtesies of common life. It was "Give, give, give:" from the multitude. Followed for the loaves and fishes; sought that he might heal; welcomed that he might impart some new blessing: such was his reception among mankind. Even some of the disciples followed him for the sake of the coming glory of his promised kingdom; while only a few, a very few, responded to his pure, sympathetic nature. Therefore he sought the holy quiet of Galilee, where the waves would bathe his feet; where the gentle breeze would give him the kiss of welcome; and where the night dews would anoint his head—which things his eminent but neglectful host had carelessly omitted.

He was soon to make his last tour through these beautiful hills and the plains below, and then he must go to Jerusalem. The near future loomed up before him as a dark mountain, and the cross showed out as a spectre in the midnight hour; but still, farther back than all the blackness, the mountain-tops were ablaze with glory. His prophetic eye saw it all, and this the disciples must be told.

As one who looks through the thick darkness to the bright light beyond, and sees nothing but the brightness; so had these disciples, when reading the Prophets concerning CHRIST, overlooked all the sorrow and painful rejection, seeing only the ultimate glory of the kingdom of GOD.

JESUS had hinted more than once to them the sufferings connected with the triumph; but their eyes were blinded by the glory, and they could see naught beside. So, on a calm, quiet day, when he was alone with his Chosen, he commences the sad disclosure, by getting from them an expression of their faith in him.

"Whom do men say that I, the SON OF MAN, am?" he asked.

"Some say that thou art JOHN THE BAPTIZER; some ELIAS; and others, JEREMIAS, or one of the Prophets;" they answered.

"But whom say ye that I am?" he questioned, still further.

"Thou art the CHRIST, the Son of the living GOD;" said the ardent PETER.

"Verily, SIMON! thou art blessed among the children of men; for my FATHER hath communed

with thee, and hath revealed this to thee. But I beseech thee, tell to no man that I am the CHRIST;" said JESUS, and continued, sorrowfully: "The SON OF GOD must suffer many things of the elders of the Jews and the chief priests, and be killed; but on the third day he will rise from the dead."

"Be it far from thee, my Master! this shall not be. Dost thou not see how all men seek thee, and would already have proclaimed thee king; but thou wouldest not?" said PETER, somewhat authoritatively.

"SIMON, SIMON! thou speakest not the things of GOD; but SATAN hath blinded thy heart to the truth. I bid him: 'Get thee behind me'; that thou mayest see clearer."

Then he spoke plainly to them of his mission, his agony, his death and resurrection. They saw it; but O, the disappointment! Could it be that he would not restore to them the kingdom after all: after leaving all, must they go back again to homes and former occupations, and have the finger of ridicule pointed at them? Must they hear it said: "These men looked for one JESUS of Nazareth, a carpenter's son, to redeem Israel; but now he lieth in the grave?"

"But what doth this rising from the dead mean?" said JOHN, musingly.

"I know not: while he liveth he raiseth others; but if he be himself dead how can he possibly come forth?"

As the bird that soars the highest drops the lowest to drink; so their hopes, once so high and bright, fell to the earth; and their saddened faces

showed only too plainly the faded gladness. PETER, JAMES and JOHN, always foremost, and first to be known as his followers, felt it most keenly. Still they determined to go with him in all his fortunes, to death if needs be; for surely one that could raise the dead must be of God, and have the words of everlasting life. Poor human nature, never well balanced, it seems now that its eyes were turned from the light and could not see through the darkness to catch a glimpse of the star of hope.

The week following this conference with JESUS had been unusually quiet and long to the disciples. They remained in retirement, away from the busy, expectant throng; hence had nothing to take their minds from the painful conversation.

JESUS noticed it; and desiring that they might not altogether lose sight of the glory, takes the three leaders of the Apostles up into a mountain; while the others remained behind in the plain. As the evening shades advanced he sat in their midst, talking of God's love to men, and his own advent into this sinful world, until night had finally settled in upon them. Sleep was now closing the eyelids of the tired disciples, as the curtains are drawn over our windows, and JESUS retired a little distance from them to pray.

While still heavy with sleep, a light brighter than the noonday sun steals through those closed lids, and they are awakened. What is it they see? A vision of unearthly splendor! All around is glory, far brighter than any radiance of Israelitish history; the sky and air glow with light and beauty, and the earth reflects back the rays, as it had been a

mirror. JESUS is there with a robe of purest white — whiter and more glorious than the cleanest snow with the noonday sun shining brilliantly upon it. And, look! with him are two others — MOSES, the lawgiver; and ELIAS, the prophet. MOSES, who died, whom GOD buried; but who now appears as a proof of the resurrection. And ELIJAH, who was translated that he should not see death; a sample of the living ones who shall never die, but shall be changed to immortality, without tasting death.

Ah! ye sad disciples! with hopes blighted as withered flowers, this is surely a miniature picture of the coming kingdom for which you long. The earth ablaze with glory; the King in her midst; and his subjects around him: didst thou think it would be so grand? But what are they talking of? His death! That darkest theme, which so saddened their hearts not many days ago; those glorified Beings speak of the cross! Therefore, fear not; that of which the ransomed talk cannot be too dreary for earth.

In the midst of all this amazing beauty, PETER broke forth:

“LORD! it is good for us to be here: let us make here three tabernacles, one for thee, one for MOSES, and one for ELIAS.”

Just at that moment, a cloud, still brighter, enveloped them, and a Voice from the cloud, awful and sweet, said:

“This is my beloved SON, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.”

Fear and trembling overcame the disciples, and they fell on their faces.

“Arise! and be not afraid!” said a gentle, familiar voice; and they felt the touch of a human hand. They looked up, and there stood JESUS alone. The vision had entirely gone.

O, thou Mount Hermon! a spark of glory has fallen on thy crest, such as will cover the entire earth, as the waters cover the sea! Thou hast borne the King in his beauty; but such loveliness and grandeur could not be thine to endure until the ransomed of the LORD return to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; then shall the earth blossom as the rose, and the desert places thereof break forth and sing!

Sunshine and shadow go hand in hand, and often at the rich man's door we see the beggar; so here, at the base of the Mount of wondrous glory, we find the vale of suffering.

Hardly had JESUS with his disciples reached the plain below, when they observed much commotion and confusion among the people. A sarcastic smile played upon the faces of the Scribes and Pharisees; while embarrassment covered the disciples with shame. JESUS, always jealous for his own, seeing their consternation, demanded of the haughty rulers:

“What question ye with them?”

The look of displeasure and authority upon his face, made them feel keenly that he abhorred the cowardice that took advantage of his absence to seek the overthrow of the faith of his half-instructed and timid disciples.

Awed by his majesty they hesitated to reply, seeking for some plausible excuse for their inter-

ference, when a man who had been holding a poor struggling child in his arms came forward. He neither accuses nor excuses the disciples or the Scribes; and with less disposition to answer the LORD's question than to ask healing for this afflicted boy, he says: "Master! I have brought unto thee my child, who is a lunatic, and dumb: I pray thee, have mercy upon us; for oftentimes the spirit taketh him, and teareth him, and he crieth out in his anguish. I brought him to thy disciples, and besought them to cast him out; but they could not."

Looking upon the curious throng, the scoffing Scribes, the anxious and almost helpless father, and the embarrassed disciples, who stood about him leaning upon their staves with bowed heads, he said, with a deep sigh:

"O, faithless and perverse generation; how long shall I be with you? how long shall I bear with you? bring thy son to me."

Poor child! there he was, writhing and twisting, while his father sought to hold him.

"How long hath he been thus?" asked the sympathetic JESUS, willing to have the tale of woe poured forth and the burdened heart relieved.

"Of a child;" said the parent; and he again narrated the pain and the possibility of a sudden horrible death, hinting also at the constant care demanded.

"But if thou canst do anything for us, have compassion on us;" he continued. If his faith had been strong, it was now greatly shaken; for since the disciples had failed to heal him, he almost despaired of help from any quarter whatsoever.

"If thou canst believe;" said JESUS, quickly, with emphasis on the words "thou" and "believe"; "all things are possible to him that believeth."

Still holding the idiotic and suffering boy in his arms, with hope and faith almost extinct, the necessary conditions seemingly out of reach, he answered:

"O, LORD! I do believe; help thou my unbelief;" while tears, index of the heart's deep feeling, coursed down the furrows of his care-worn face, and his whole body trembled with agitation.

The surrounding crowd was by this time in great expectation. Some elbowed their way through to the front, that they might be near to see if this thing could be done; others ran a little up the hill-side to overlook the rest of the people; some raised upon tip-toe, or mounted little rocks or stones which happened to be near them; some stretched their necks and peered over shoulders: all were anxious to see what would happen.

"I charge thee, Come out of him; and enter no more into him;" said JESUS.

At that moment, a perfect storm of agony seized the lad. Convulsion followed convulsion; the stiffened hands and feet dug into the earth; and with eyes rolled back, and foaming mouth, he presented a horrible picture. It was only however for a brief space; yet while it was in progress the disciples were visibly alarmed, while the Scribes nudged each other and jeered.

"The spirit teareth him, just as when we commanded him;" whispered one disciple to another; and one was about to say to JESUS, as he stood

still, without taking any further action: "Master! speak again;" but at that moment, with a loud, piercing cry, suffering another throe of pain, he was left limp, and apparently lifeless. JESUS showed no sign of perturbation, but taking him by the hand, lifted him up.

Has the reader ever seen the elements at war — the clouds in blackness, shooting forth darts of forked lightning; the thunder, pealing as a hundred cannon; the heavens so heavy it seemed they must fall; the rain in masses, driven with fury by the wind, until all living creatures were driven to cover in some sheltered spot? Then, again, has he seen it all change: the wind cease; the clouds roll back; the sun burst through; the flowers lift up their heads; the trees sparkle, as with a thousand diamonds; the whole earth smile through her tears; while a bright rainbow spanned the sky, pledge of God's promise that there shall be no more a flood while the world endures? — if this has been seen, then can be imagined the calm after the pitiless storm, the sunshine after gloom, and the rainbow promise, made of a hundred smiles, which said, "return no more," as it bedecked the brow of the emancipated youth. Yes; thus did he come forth from the hand of the enemy, as the earth emerges from the baptism of a storm.

Not that the storm makes the earth to beam and smile; it is the sun that brings back the freshness and the glory. And it was the Sun of righteousness, arising with healing in his wings, that tinged the faded cheek, brightened the dimmed eye, and strengthened the drooping head and palsied limbs

of the young man who now stood beside his faithful parent, and then fell down at JESUS' feet; not in supplication, but in adoration.

Hundreds followed the father and son, and hundreds followed JESUS; but when the disciples found him alone, they asked him:

“Why could we not cast him out?”

“This kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting;” answered JESUS. “Now, thou art children of the bridechamber; but the days will come when the Bridegroom will be taken from you, and then shall ye fast.”

CHAPTER XI.

Let earthlings build their homes of ease,
Our rest is yet to come;
A tent, with hardship, here our lot,
And then a glorious home.

—*W. Kellaway.*

THE Feast of Tabernacles, one of the most joyous feasts of the Jews, was now nigh at hand. It was held in the fall of the year, after the harvests had been gathered in, and was celebrated in remembrance of their wilderness-journey. It was also a season of general instruction to the young, and to strangers; for during the seven days of its duration, the law was daily read and sacrifices were offered, each new day being ushered in with blast of trumpet from the Temple.

To recall their desert wanderings, they left their comfortably furnished homes, and dwelt in booths for one week. These were little apartments, scantily furnished, made of thickly foliaged boughs of trees.

There friends met who had been separated for months. There parents, children and grandchildren renewed the family affection, gossiped a little of the past, and laid their plans for the coming year. Their national troubles were discussed; but, most of all, were the traditions and stories of Israelitish wanderings repeated.

Old men took fair-haired children upon their knees and told them the story of the infant MOSES: how he was hid for three months, and then put into a rude basket and set afloat on the broad river; how he was found by PHARAOH'S daughter and reared in the king's palace; and how, when he became a man, he was mighty under GOD to rescue Israel from Egyptian bondage. Then came the story of their wanderings—how they crossed the Red Sea; how GOD fed them with manna every day for forty years; how he sent them quails for meat, and water gushed out of the flinty rock; how a cloud led them all the way, a shelter from the scorching sun by day, and a light guiding them by night; how the waters of the Jordan rolled back to let them through; and how GOD drove out the heathen before them.

Nor did they forget to tell of the promised MESSIAH, who would, with a mighty outstretched arm, redeem their now oppressed nation from the Roman yoke, and establish the kingdom in greater glory than that of SOLOMON'S. Then the older ones would take up the subject, and speak of JESUS of Nazareth, whose fame was spreading abroad over all the country. Was he the CHRIST who was to come?—many were the opinions respecting him. The common people mostly thought him a good man; but the rulers denounced him as an impostor.

“Will he come to the feast?” some enquired.

“Will he do any mighty works here, as he hath done in Galilee?” questioned others; but no one knew.

Meanwhile JESUS was making his way to Jerusalem. He had looked upon the beautiful waters of the Sea of Galilee for the last time; he would tread its shores and rest upon its surrounding hillsides no more in his humiliation. He had bidden "adieu" to friends and followers; and with his disciples had set out for the Holy City. His brethren urged him to go and there perform his mighty works, and proclaim himself king, if he was indeed the CHRIST; but neither persuaded nor detained by men, he tarried until almost all had left, and then, with his Apostles, made his way through Samaria, toward JUDAH's capital.

Just before this, however, he ordained seventy additional disciples, to those before chosen, to go and carry the glad news of salvation, giving them power to prove their mission by signs and wonders.

The Samaritans, bigoted and filled with hatred toward the Jews, when they saw him bound for Jerusalem, supposing that he there intended to set up his kingdom, would not receive him into their city, so he passed by it and kept on his way.

But disease and suffering seldom stop to quibble, and have but few, if any prejudices. Outside one of the cities, near to the borders of Judea, was a leper settlement, where dwelt many outcasts. Among these unfortunates, the prejudices and jealousy existing between Jew and Samaritan had been laid aside, and living together, they begged a scant subsistence, waiting till death should come to their relief.

Seeing a throng approaching, a few of the more able ones crawled out to the wayside, to ask alms.

"Who is it that cometh?" asked one.

"It may be some of the pilgrims, on their way to Jerusalem, to attend the feast;" replied a companion.

"Few come through our country; but behold here is quite a multitude."

"It must be JESUS, of Nazareth, with his disciples;" suddenly exclaimed one, who thus far had been little interested; and then—and hope seemed to dwell in his words—he continued: "he passed through this way over two years ago, and tarried in one of our cities a couple of days; and it was said he healed all who came to him."

"O that we could be healed!" sighed one man, more afflicted and wretched than the rest.

"Let us cry unto him, as he passeth; may be he will look upon us, and help us.

JESUS had come fully opposite them, and without further waiting, the poor man cried out in a loud voice, full of desperate longing and pathetic appeal:

"JESUS, Master! have mercy upon us."

JESUS stopped and looked up, his ear quick to catch the cry of distress, and said:

"Who calleth me?"

"The lepers, Master;" said one of the disciples: "behold them. yonder!"

As he halted, turning his head sideways to look upon them, they cried again in broken chorus:

"Have mercy upon us; O, LORD."

Such a pitiful sight! Here were ten men, banished from home and society, with longings and desires like other men; shunned by all, and stoned should they approach too near. JESUS looked upon

them — these poor representatives of the race which God created so noble and beautiful at the beginning; alas! now so marred and blighted by sin — and lifting his voice so that they might hear, he called out to them:

“Go, show yourselves to the priests.”

Off they started, making their way as best they could in their weak and disabled condition, when, as they went, to their amazement and joy, they became aware that they were cleansed! Anxious to obtain the certificate from the priests that would license them to mingle again with friends and family, they hastened on; but one, realizing the wonderful cure, and the kindness of his Benefactor, turned back to seek JESUS, and to thank him. The others were content with the blessing; but he would seek the Blessor.

“Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?” said JESUS, as the man, having overtaken him, burst forth in exclamations of joy and thanksgiving.

“Only one, and he a Samaritan, hath returned to give glory to God;” he continued, to his disciples. Then, taking the man by the hand, he bestowed upon him the additional blessing of cleansing from sin, and having done so, he bade him go his way.

“Our LORD doeth marvellous things;” said PHILIP to ANDREW, that evening, as they rested together. “Surely, he bringeth in a new law; for our law doth not command us to love those who do us evil. But he doeth good to all men, the unjust as well as the just; and teacheth us to do the

same. Why, even to-day, he healed the Samaritan as well as the Jew."

"It seemeth strange to us;" replied ANDREW; "for last night did not the very brethren of this leper drive us from their town, and would not let us lodge with them, nor give us to eat, though our Master was foot-sore and hungry? And, as thou sayest, to-day he healeth their sick, and sendeth him home with a blessing."

"For what doth he this great good? Not that he may receive favor; for he sayeth unto JOHN that he returneth no more into Galilee, nor passeth through this country again; therefore they cannot do him good if they would, since he giveth them not the opportunity.

"I know not; it passeth understanding."

JESUS' entrance into Jerusalem was as he would have it—in comparative secrecy. When near the city, he sent some of his disciples on ahead to prepare lodgings for himself and them, and when with his remaining disciples he came to the gate, they entered almost unobserved.

In the morning, these humble men, with their divine Master, were awakened by the blast of the trumpet, and early presented themselves at the Temple.

This was a most important epoch in the life of CHRIST. Heretofore he had dwelt in Galilee. Accompanied by his Apostles, he had visited its cities, preaching the gospel and healing the sick. Beside being a friend to the poor and the oppressed, he had declared his Divine Sonship; yet thus far he had been to them more as a perfect man than

as the SON OF GOD, exercising the authority and demanding the privileges of his heavenly relationship.

All the rites and ceremonies of the elaborate Jewish services centred in him: his FATHER had made it so. The sacrifices pointed to him. The golden candlestick, giving light day and night in the Temple, typified him as "the light of the world." The table of shew-bread, always fresh, spoke of him as "the bread of life." The waters which the priests brought from the Pool of Siloam, at this particular feast, and turned into the silver basin at the altar, to bring to remembrance the water which GOD caused to gush out of the rock in the wilderness, symbolized him as "the living water, of which if a man drink he shall never thirst." It seemed that this well-beloved SON was continually in the mind of the FATHER when he instituted these ceremonies; and now CHIRST had come to his own as the substance of these many shadows.

At this time Jerusalem sat like a queen upon her throne of hills, the neighboring cities sending their subjects to worship at her feet. Beautiful for situation, the joy and pride of the whole nation! And the Temple, dazzling in its marble whiteness, with its wealth of gold, was as a crown upon her head.

Her priests habited in white linen, and her high-priest in his richly ornamented dress embroidered with gold — sometimes called the "golden vestment" — dwelt within her walled enclosure. Proud, wealthy and lordly, they were careful to keep the

letter of the Law, and never failed in the observance of the many fasts and prayers of their religion; but the spiritual signification of what they did they failed to grasp.

So when JESUS appeared in the Temple, on the fifth day of the feast, and taught the common people, in words simple and plain, the meaning of the beautiful service, they were charmed with his gracious words, and astonished at his teaching.

"We never heard it on this wise before," some said; "they are new words."

"Whence hath this man this wisdom?" they queried one of another.

"The teaching and explanations that I give you of these types is not mine, but his who sent me;" replied JESUS, who knew what they questioned.

"And if any man will do my FATHER'S will, he will know whether my words be true, or whether I speak of myself."

"He doubteth our acceptance of the FATHER, because we are uncertain whether these things be true, or not; for he saith, 'If any man know the FATHER, he will know me whom he hath sent;'" said some, eager to find something to accuse him of, and willing to believe that he meant to condemn them.

"He maketh himself to be the CHRIST;" said others; "but we know that when CHRIST cometh, no man knoweth whence he is. This man we know: is he not the carpenter JOSEPH'S son, who dwelleth at Nazareth? Did he not live among us for thirty years as a common mechanic, unlearned and poor? And now he seeketh to make himself

as GOD! Will he teach us, and our learned doctors, when he himself hath never been taught?"

"But doth not GOD choose the weak things of this world to confound the mighty? Did not GOD choose DAVID to be king, as he followed the sheep? And AMOS, who was a gatherer of fruit, to be his prophet? And did he not call GIDEON, as he thrashed wheat, to put to flight the Midianites?" said one, bolder than the rest.

"Art thou also one of his disciples?" replied the first speaker, his eye flashing with scorn.

While this discussion was progressing among the common people, the Sanhedrin had met in their chamber to see what measures had better be taken to suppress the growing agitation in JESUS' favor. Their decision was to arrest him; and they dispatched officers for the purpose.

Some of the Jews knowing this, said, when they saw JESUS sitting and teaching so openly in the Temple:

"Is not this he whom they seek to kill?"

But the days passed by and none laid hands upon him, although he exposed himself, and publicly taught the people.

On the last day of the Feast — the greatest day of all — JESUS was early at the Temple. He had watched the slaying of the sacrifices and the burning of incense, and had told his disciples that these sweet spices which ascended continually and filled the whole enclosure with their fragrance, was like the prayers of GOD's people, that rose unceasingly to his throne; and were as pleasant to him as the sweet odors were to them. He also explained

to them that the Holy of holies was typical of heaven, where GOD resided; and that as on the great Day of Atonement the high priest entered into the holiest, there to appear for the people; so he would enter into the true heaven, there to appear before GOD for the sins of the world.

“But Master! thou art born to be king,” said his disciples; “how then canst thou be our high priest?”

“Verily, verily, I am a king; but my kingdom is not of this world;” he answered.

Just then two priests came in, one bearing a pitcher of water drawn from the Pool Siloam, and the other a pitcher of wine. An irregular procession of men, women and children followed them, chanting the Psalms of DAVID; and as the priests poured forth the water and wine into basins on either side of the altar, the whole multitude burst into the rapturous anthem of the Prophet ISAIAH: “With joy shall we draw water out of the wells of salvation!” Again and again they repeated it, until the arches and cloisters echoed and re-echoed with the joyful strains.

There was beauty in it, as it brought to remembrance the water which gushed out of the rock in the wilderness; but the greater beauty, that that water was emblematic of the CHRIST, was not even dreamed of. Stepping aside from the throng that was always going and coming to worship, JESUS raised his voice and cried:

“If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.” Then he taught them the deeper meaning of the ceremony they had just beheld, and

explained to them that he was that living water, sent from JEHOVAH to quench the thirst of every longing soul.

Among his listeners were the officers who had been sent to arrest him, Scribes and Pharisees, and many of the humbler class. Most of the latter well understood his meaning, for they were oppressed, and longed for deliverance. They loved the Temple service, yet could not fully understand it; so the simple teaching of JESUS satisfied them, and many believed on him.

The officers also were astonished at his words; and when they returned to the chief priests, who questioned severely—

“Why have ye not brought him?” they answered:

“Never man spake like this man!”

CHAPTER XII.

I too was blind, with him of old;
My Saviour was unknown to me;
But 'tis my happiness to say:
"Though I was blind, to-day I see!"
— *W. Kellaway.*

THE enmity that the Jews bore to JESUS was growing stronger each day. They had nothing against him as a man; indeed, almost to the last of them, they would have been willing to admit that he was a "good man." And if he had come to them simply as a Prophet, they might have listened to him respectfully, at least for a while. But he had proclaimed himself the SON OF GOD; and as such they were determined they would not accept him.

There were two reasons for this—First: when JESUS came to them and saw the deceit and hypocrisy of their rulers, he laid their sins bare before them, and instead of repenting, as they should have done, cleansing themselves from their wickedness, they wrapped the cloak of self-righteousness tighter about them, and covered up the venomous serpent in their bosom. Then they became so filled with wrath, that they refused to search and see if he were indeed the CHRIST, the SON OF GOD; therefore they were wilfully ignorant of his divine origin.

Second: they had become so thoroughly settled in the belief that ELIJAH, who was translated, would return as the forerunner of the MESSIAH, and that CHRIST would suddenly come into the Temple with power and great glory, that they were unprepared to receive the peculiar Man of the Desert, JOHN the BAPTIZER, as the ELIAS; neither were they willing to accept the still more humble man JESUS, who had dwelt among them in poverty for thirty years as the CHRIST.

That he who had grown up in their midst, a common carpenter, should now claim to be the SON OF GOD and their rightful ruler, leader and teacher, when they had sons of their own whom they considered far higher than he, more skilled in war and better fitted to wear the diadem, filled them with a jealousy and indignation which knew no bounds. Therefore, being so possessed with hatred, they would not search to see if he were what he represented himself to be; and their jealousy was such they could not see, even if anyone undertook to show them; hence they hardened their hearts toward him, that they might not understand and believe on him.

Of course, not accepting him as the SON OF GOD, but believing him to be a common man, they were also jealous of the influence he exerted over the masses. It was a parallel case to that of JOSEPH. Envious because he was more righteous than they, and because they could find no fault in him, their bitterness had ripened into meditated violence, and they sought to take his life, although when charged with so doing they indignantly denied it.

JESUS had now been with them for about three months, most of the time teaching privately in the Temple; and now Winter was approaching.

We have already been introduced to that lovely home in Bethany where JESUS so delighted to be, and much of his unemployed time was spent in that refuge.

LAZARUS, the elder of the family trio, was about the age of JESUS, and a most ardent friend. It would have been hard to find in all that country a nobler youth than he; his mild blue eye, beaming with love and tenderness; his whole face aglow with intelligence, and lit up with smiles which scattered cheer around him; his dignified and manly bearing, all aided to prepossess one in his favor. But his sunny disposition and devout religious character impressed one most of all.

MARTHA, the elder sister, was such a one as SOLOMON thought of when he wrote the Thirty-first chapter of Proverbs. Her eye was keener than her brother's; her love no less tender, perhaps, but more matter-of-fact; her whole deportment caretaking and business-like.

But MARY — the lovely, gentle MARY — who can describe her? Lacking the deep thought and dignity of her brother and sister, there was yet in her a warm, tender love, a trustful disposition, a nature submissive to goodness, and a piety so deep and fervent as to lend a charm which won for her an entrance to every heart.

But some one might say: "Had these, then, no faults? That is generally the way those we read about are represented. They are not like our-

selves, constantly doing things we ought not to do, beside making many mistakes."

We admit authors are apt to picture their favorites as faultless; but in the Scriptures we have only one hero, GOD'S beloved SON. He is the Man from heaven; not of this world; sent by the great GOD to be a perfect pattern for the world; and would any think a faulty pattern to be GOD's copy for man to imitate? GOD made man good in the beginning, but he fell; then he delivered him a code of laws, telling him what to do to be righteous; but still he came short of the standard. Then said GOD: "I will set him an example; I will give him a pattern." So he chose his own SON, and sent him to live among men, subject to the usual temptations, hardships and trials; that he might by example, show us what perfection is. Hence, CHRIST is faultless.

In heaven, where all are perfect, CHRIST is the "Ever-to-be Adored," the "Wonderful," the "Chief," the "Prince"; and it matters not if human beings stand back, stubbornly refusing to follow the Example, questioning his perfections; still is it a fact that holiness, truth and faultlessness are his with GOD; and that his FATHER finds no imperfection in him whatsoever.

But these three of our story, the happy family of Bethany, had their faults, although they were almost undiscernible amid their many virtues, as a glimpse of a little incident from their daily life will show.

MARTHA, as already said, was a queen of housewives. Always busy, and planning for the enter-

tainment and comfort of her guests and family, she made social enjoyment of secondary importance; and it was not until the household cares were gone, her guests refreshed by an inviting repast — which was never wanting at her table — and their comfort well attended to, that she would indulge in the friendly chat, so enjoyable to most persons.

It might not have been thus had MARY not a special delight and aptitude for the social entertainment of company; so that the more laborious work of preparing for the refreshment of guests seemed unavoidably to fall upon her sister. Not that MARY was unwilling to do her share of the serving; for her sympathetic nature and loving heart could never rest while another was burdened. But MARTHA, anxious to shield this darling sister from every wearisome duty, left to her only the lighter tasks, imposing on herself the heavier. Thus it was that MARY was sometimes thoughtless, and neglectful of the many household duties; while MARTHA grew weary, and a little impatient, under their heavy strain.

Of all who came to their home, there was none whom MARTHA loved to do for as she did for JESUS. For him she made the most tempting viands; for him she spread the snowiest cloth, and brought out the costliest and best dishes; the choicest fruits and flowers graced their table, when he was there. All that her inventive brain could think of, and all that her skillful hands could do, was done for JESUS.

But MARY sat at his feet, and listened to his gracious words. Eyes and ears wide open, she was

eager to catch the meaning of every word as he discoursed upon the Scriptures, or uttered some instructive parable.

On this particular day, JESUS had been alone much of the time, engaged in prayer; and when he came out in the cool of the evening, and seated himself with his disciples, and LAZARUS and MARY, they took occasion to ask him to teach them to pray, as JOHN had taught his disciples.

“When ye pray, say, ‘Our FATHER’;” said he. Then he taught them the necessity of praying with desire that his kingdom come: this was to be their first petition. “Also, pray to be forgiven; as ye have already forgiven those who have sinned against you. And ask to be led away from all temptation and evil.”

He then told them of a man who had a friend visit him at midnight. The visitor was weary and hungry with his long journey; and his host was minded to give him some refreshment before he retired; but when he went to fetch it, he discovered there was not so much as a piece of bread in the house.

“However, there is my neighbor,” he thought; “whom I have befriended so many times; I will go and ask him for the loan of three small loaves.”

It was some time before his neighbor, who was in a deep sleep, could be aroused; but finally he awoke.

“I can not arise and give thee; for it is dark, and the door is latched. Beside, my children are all asleep, and I do not wish to disturb them. If any noise should awaken them, they might be

frightened, imagining some thief was prowling around;" he said, in response to his friend's request, and to his great astonishment. Nevertheless he kept on knocking and pleading, for he must have the bread; so at last, being wearied with his begging, the unwilling and disobliging neighbor arose and gave him as much as he needed.

"I say unto you," said JESUS, though he would not give him because he was a friend; yet, because of his importunity, he gave him. So, if ye knock it shall be opened unto you; if ye ask it shall be given you: your heavenly FATHER is more willing to give good things unto his children, than earthly parents are to give good gifts unto theirs; and he knoweth ye have need of all these things."

All this time MARTHA had been busy preparing the evening meal; and MARY, absorbed in the wonderful words she was hearing, had not noticed the look of exhaustion on her sister's flushed countenance, as she went in and out arranging the table. Finally, she stopped at the door, and addressing JESUS, said, in a discontented and injured, if not a slightly reproachful tone:

"LORD! dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her, therefore, that she help me."

MARY flew to her sister's side, as she heard this, saying:

"Forgive me, my Sister! I was thoughtless of thy cares; and JESUS' conversation so charmed me, I forgot everything else. Sit thou down here, by the Master, and listen, while I take thy place;" and in a moment she was gone.

JESUS well knew the pure love that prompted this unusual anxiety, and fully appreciated it; but desiring that his presence should be a rest and refreshment to them, rather than a care, he looked upon her, as she leaned back wearily, and said:

“MARTHA, MARTHA! thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is more needful to the longing soul than all these; and MARY hath chosen that good part. Though all things else perish and decay, this shall never be taken away from her.”

And O, how the words of JESUS soothed that tired, loving heart, as she afterwards recalled them:

“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

As JESUS and his disciples passed in and out of the gate of the Temple, they had often noticed a blind young man who sat there begging. He was not of the lowest class of beggars; his parents were very respectable, though poor; hence he was treated with more kindness and attention than common beggars. There were some who as regularly laid by a little alms for him as they did their mite for the purchase of daily food; and quite frequently persons of the higher class would stop to speak a few words to him.

He was quite well known to PHILIP and NATHANAEL; and more than once had they spent a little while with him, trying to open his darkened

mind to behold the beauty of the coming day. But thus far their words had seemed like seed sown by the wayside, which the birds steal away: immediately as they left him, some of his friends, who were enemies of JESUS, came and overthrew all their arguments. His mind was so very dark as to cause them to wonder; so one day as they neared the gate, and saw him at a distance, they asked JESUS:

“Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?”

Many of the Jews believed that all sickness and defect was because of some sin committed by the sufferer or his ancestors, and was the result of GOD's curse, or judgment; hence, until the sick were healed, they were looked upon as visited by the displeasure of GOD. JESUS at once overthrew this notion, saying:

“Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but he hath suffered all these years, until this day, that the works of GOD should be made manifest in him.”

The poor man caught these words: “Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents.”

“Ah!” he said to PHILIP, who now stood beside him; “not all men think that I and my parents are greater sinners, or more cursed of GOD, than others, because I am blind; for didst thou not hear what that man said?”

“That was JESUS who spake, of whom I have so often told you;” said PHILIP, anxious to tell of the goodness of the LORD; “he doth not condemn thee.”

“Why! didst thou not hear of the woman who yesterday was taken in the most horrible sin of adultery; whom the Law says must be stoned? She was brought to JESUS, by a furious mob, who were taking her outside the city to put her to death. Just to betray our LORD into a snare, they told him her sin, and questioned what should be done. If he had said, ‘Smite her!’ they would have accused him of cruelty; and if he had sought to shield and release her, they would have called him a sinner, as well as she. How could the Master answer and avoid these dilemmas?

“JESUS appeared deeply thoughtful. He was sitting down on the steps of the Temple; and sitting there, he wrote with his finger upon the pavement. I could see by their smiles, and their nods one to another, that they thought they had at last baffled him, seeing he was silent so long; but at last he looked up, and said:

“‘He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.’

“We watched them; and, if you will believe it, they all departed, one by one, with drooped heads and downcast eyes, until the woman was left alone with JESUS — not even the officers with her. Then he looked up again, and said:

“‘Woman! where are thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?’ And she said:

“‘No man; LORD.’

“‘Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more.’”

During this conversation, JESUS had stood apart from them, talking with some who had sought him;

but coming over to the blind man, he took his hand, and said:

“Peace be unto thee!”

The sightless eyes rolled up imploringly to JESUS, as he said:

“O, JESUS! have mercy on me.”

He made no reply; but PHILIP said:

“Have faith; he turneth none away empty.”

JESUS was standing by his side, moulding a little piece of moistened clay into a kind of soft salve; and as he gently rubbed it over the blind eyes, he said:

“Go; wash in the Pool Siloam.”

The blind man felt around for his staff to go at once to the Pool; but how could he find his way there without a guide?

“I will go with thee, and lead thee;” said PHILIP, who looked after him interestedly; and taking him by the hand, he led him to the Pool.

“Shall I truly have my sight?” he asked, as he went; “it appeareth to me like a dream.”

“The Master hath done as wonderful works as this;” said the Apostle. “One day, at Capernaum, he was teaching in a house. The press was so great that those in the house could not get out, neither could those outside get in; but four men, who had brought a friend, sick of the palsy, climbed upon the top of the house, broke up the roof, and let the palsied man down at JESUS’ feet. There he lay, shaking and trembling, and JESUS with one word healed him; so that he took up his bed, and walked home.

They walked on in silence for a few moments.

"I shall never sit by the gate and beg again;" mused the man. "O, how wonderful it will be to see the hills, and birds, and trees. I once had a bird in my hand, and felt its little head, and wings and feathers; they told me its feathers were different colors, and very beautiful; but I could not understand what 'colors' meant. My mother tells me that the sky is blue, and the grass green; and that the flowers are white, yellow and red; but I cannot comprehend it. She once told me that some mornings the grass is all covered with little drops of water, which she called 'dew,' and that in the sunshine they sparkle like gems.

"What is the sunshine? and what is it to sparkle?' I asked; but she only said: 'My poor child!' and I heard her sob."

"Here! we are come to the Pool;" said PHILIP, as he led him carefully down the steps. "Now, stoop down, and bathe thine eyes; for here is the water."

The man obeyed. The sun had dried the clay on his eye-lids, making them feel dirty and stiff; and as he knelt there washing them, and picking off the clay, for a moment he lost sight of the miraculous cure for which he had come, thinking entirely of getting his eyes clean. All at once he stopped, raised his head, and for an instant gazed full into the water, in wonderment; then, turning to his friend, he exclaimed:

"O, PHILIP! is this seeing? Wonderful! wonderful!" and he stood with clasped hands. "Can it be? This seems like Paradise!" he continued. Every moment the rapture became more over-

whelming, until he was completely lost in a blissful amazement.

"Come!" said PHILIP; "let us go and seek JESUS."

As they hastened back, every few steps he would stop, and exclaim:

"PHILIP, PHILIP! what is that?"

"That is the Temple of our GOD;" replied PHILIP to one question, as the young man pointed to the imposing structure of marble; "and that is 'smoke' that goeth upward: it riseth from the even-sacrifice. That gate yonder, is called gate 'Beautiful.'"

"I have sat there and begged many, many times; said the once blind man; "but who is he that cometh toward us?" he asked, with reference to one who was approaching them.

"That is the High Priest. Thou canst tell him by the phylacteries and the large borders of his garment;" and PHILIP pointed these out to him.

"I thought it might be JESUS. O, what he hath done for me!"

"Give GOD the praise;" said a priest, who had followed them; for there were many coming and going. "I saw thee at the Pool when thou didst receive thy sight; and we know, no one but GOD can give sight to the blind."

"But GOD worketh through whomsoever he will; or else, why didst thou not bid me: 'Go, wash; and come, seeing?'" he replied boldly.

"We know that this man — JESUS of Nazareth — is a sinner;" replied the priest, scornfully, as he left them to go another way.

After an extensive but fruitless search for JESUS, PHILIP started for Bethany; while the young man who had been blind returned home.

When PHILIP reached Bethany, he found JESUS and the other disciples there.

"Where didst thou leave our friend who was blind?" asked NATHANAEL.

"I left him outside the gate of the Temple, on his way home;" said PHILIP, with a sigh.

"Thou dost look sad: what causeth it? was he not healed?"

"Yes, truly; and such joy and gladness I have seldom seen. But the rulers of the Temple have cast him out, because he believeth on JESUS; and even his own father and mother are vexed that he doth so openly publish his cure."

"Master! would it not be well to let the blindness of this man fall upon them; as ELISHA, the prophet, commanded the leprosy of NAAMAN to come upon his servant GEHAZI, for his wickedness?" asked one.

"Nay, nay; greater blindness hath already overtaken them than the blindness of this man;" said JESUS, alluding to the hardness of their hearts.

"But what said the rulers to him?" asked NATHANAEL, still interested in his friend.

"I will tell thee." After we returned to the gate, and could not find JESUS, we went to the Temple, thinking, perhaps he had gone there to wait until we came. There we met some of his neighbors; and I saw that they questioned among themselves if this were really he who was born blind. He overheard them speaking, and recog-

nizing their voices, although he knew not their faces, said:

“ ‘Yes; I am he.’ ”

“ ‘How didst thou then receive thy sight?’ they asked, in astonishment. Then followed a recital of what you well know.

“ ‘Wilt thou show thyself to the Pharisees, and tell them, as thou hast told us?’ they asked of him.

“ ‘So we went; but because it was on the Sabbath day that he was healed, they murmured against JESUS, and would not believe that the man was ever blind. Then they called his parents, who said: ‘Yes; this is our son, and he was born blind; but how he received his sight we know not; he is of age, let him speak for himself.’ Fearing that they should be questioned further, they then retired to another part of the Temple.

“ ‘Thou knowest that the father was once a Scribe, and of great influence; and though now he is poor, yet he, and his son also, are held in high repute; therefore the rulers were unwilling that he should go away until they had convinced him that this wonderful cure was only of GOD, and that JESUS was a deceiver. So they asked him again; but he said:

“ ‘Wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?’ At this they were very angry; but after they quieted down, he reasoned: ‘Now we know that GOD heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of him, and doeth his will, him he heareth. If this man were not of GOD, he could do nothing.’ ”

“Then they accused him of having been born in sin, and reviled him as accursed of God; therefore he was unable to teach them. Finally, they cast him out.

“If he but had the sympathy of his parents the trial would not be so grievous; but they are very bitter against JESUS and his followers; indeed, they would hardly salute me as I passed them.

CHAPTER XIII.

The loved of CHRIST take sick and die;
But see! the sun dispels the gloom!
So JESUS, in th' awaking day,
Will end their death and rend the tomb.

—*W. Kellaway.*

DURING the three years of our LORD's ministry in Judea and Galilee, in which his career excited so much comment and discussion, there was an unusual demand for the sacred Scriptures. Persons not accustomed to read now searched for themselves, to see if JESUS was indeed the true MESSIAH. The Scribes were kept busy copying from the Law and the Prophets; but none was busier than LAZARUS, the brother of MARTHA and MARY. The neatness and accuracy of his work had won much admiration; and the long Summer days that had just passed, and now the long Winter evenings, brought him little rest, so great and urgent were the requests for the Scriptures transcribed by him.

MARTHA, proud of her brother's ability, and anxious for him to succeed, had failed to notice the languid expression that had stolen the bloom from his cheeks, and the brightness from his eyes.

"Brother! thou art weary to-night;" said the gentle MARY, one evening; "lay aside thy work, and come, rest with me as the day departs; and I

will tell thee the good news I received to-day from our friend JOSEPH, of Arimathea. I think, from the way he writes, he will soon become a disciple of our dear LORD."

"Nothing would please me so much as to hear the reasons and circumstances which have led him to accept JESUS, said LAZARUS; as it is for him I am now copying the book of the prophet ISAIAH, which I hope to have ready when he cometh to Jerusalem to attend the Feast of Dedication shortly; but I must not rest until it is accomplished."

"Will JESUS be with us then?" asked MARTHA of her brother.

"I know not; the hatred of the Jews is very bitter against him, since he healed the blind man; so it may be he will delay his coming until their rage is cooled somewhat. They would have stoned him the very next day; but in some way he became hid among the people, and so departed from them.

Several weeks had now passed, and LAZARUS, still busy with his pen, was fast giving way to some dread illness. The sisters watched him with due anxiety, and often remonstrated with him about his over-doing, but he would affectionately reply:

"Be not uneasy, my dear sisters. How can I stop my work, when men are so anxious for the Scriptures, that they may search for themselves to see if JESUS is indeed the MESSIAH? Is there not a righteous cause for my labor? I am only weary; and a few days' rest, which I hope to take shortly, as soon as my work is done, will refresh me, and I shall be myself again."

But tired nature, folding her hands, refuses at times to be imposed upon, or driven further; and it was so in this case. A morning dawned, and found the beloved brother too racked with pain to leave his bed. An uncommon brightness was in his eyes, and a burning flush upon his cheek. Soon the head began to roll from side to side. The least noise affected him, and he suffered untold agony.

"O, my Brother!" was all the fond MARY could say, as her cool hand smoothed his fevered brow.

The curtains were drawn in the sick room, and the doors muffled, that their shutting might not disturb him. Kind friends, who came in to inquire after the sufferer's health and to help as they were able, went about on tip-toe or with careful tread, and whispered their sympathy to the anxious sisters.

At each turn of the day and night, the fever raged higher. No cooling drinks that MARTHA could prepare relieved the burning thirst; no remedies subdued the pain. Sometimes, for a brief spell, LAZARUS would remain quiet, and studiously move his hands and fingers, as if writing; then he would contradict and argue; and the sisters knew that he was repeating some discussion he had had with the elders in the Temple.

"O, if JESUS was only here!" sighed MARY, one morning, as she came from the bed-side, where she had watched all night, with MARTHA.

"If thou knowest where he is, why not send for him?" said a friend.

MARTHA caught the words in the adjoining room, and, with sudden thought and hope, she came to where the two were standing, and said:

"Our friend hath well spoken: we will send at once. Why did we not think of it before?"

A messenger was speedily summoned, and sent on the journey with this brief but expressive message: "LORD! he whom thou lovest is sick." It was enough, they said; JESUS would know the rest. He could heal him by a word; but probably he would come to them; so, although the sufferer tossed and turned with discomfort and pain as much on this as on former days, the sisters' hearts were lighter, and their tones more hopeful, as they greeted their neighbors who came to inquire for the sick one.

All day they watched; and when at night-fall the messenger returned, the eager sisters both said at once:

"Where is JESUS?"

"He is beyond the Jordan;" replied the man.

"And what did he say?" they inquired.

"I gave him the message you sent; and after reading it, he said: 'This sickness is not unto death; but for the glory of GOD.'"

"He cannot know how sick our brother is;" said MARTHA, with sadness, as she turned and went into the house.

Poor MARY! she still stood without, trying to explain to her own satisfaction what the LORD meant — "'Not unto death; but for the glory of GOD:' then why did he not heal him by a word, as he did the Centurion's servant?" she asked herself. "But he will not forsake us: he will surely come before death seizes our brother," she thought; and so comforted herself with the hope.

Still the hours dragged along; and while the sufferer contended less fiercely with the grim monster, yet there was more weakness; and finally, as the midnight hour approached, they saw he was marked for the grave. A few more struggles, a few more desperate graspings after life, a few more convulsive twitchings, and LAZARUS was at last dead!

Pen cannot picture the distress of the bereaved ones as the fatal blow fell. But MARY still had a glimmer of hope that JESUS would arrive before the burial of their brother, and restore him to life. For JOHN, the beloved disciple, had told them how he brought back from the dead the widow's son, and JAIRUS' little daughter; so at each sound of approaching footsteps, she would glance out of the window, hoping it might be JESUS. And one time her heart gave a quick bound, as she saw some one coming with slow, measured tread, so like JESUS'; and she ran to the door with the words: "O, my LORD!—" half spoken; when, discovering her mistake, she turned about quickly, and coming into the chamber of the dead, hid her face in the folds of the pall which covered her brother. The visitor was only one of the rulers of the Temple, who had come to speak words of comfort to the sorrowing sisters.

It was well known that they had sent for JESUS, and they trusted he would come to their help; but now that their brother was dead, and they could not imagine why the Master had not come, nor even answered their request, their grief was twofold greater.

“I cannot tell why he has not come?” she said, to the questioning Jews; “but doubtless, when he arrives he will explain all things;” yet her faith was hardly as strong as the words she uttered, so severely was it put to the test. It was not that she doubted his power to do any and every thing—she was sure with regard to his ability; but why did he not come to their relief?

All this time that JESUS remained away, his heart felt for the afflicted ones, and at the expiration of two days, he said: “Our friend LAZARUS sleepeth; but I go that I may awaken him out of sleep.”

Although he knew that his life was in danger should he return, yet he would risk death for the sake of these mourning ones; and while he allowed the midnight gloom to gather over them, it was that they should have one more proof that he was the very SON OF GOD, and his glory shine clearer in the darkness. “I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that ye may more fully believe;” he said to his disciples.

The time was soon coming when their faith in him would be severely tested, and he purposed to wall them about with strong fortifications of signs and wonders, that in the dark day their faith should not utterly fail. He would also do great things for those sisters of Bethany, and so prove his love for them; but first they must feel a great need. And hence, it was love, after all, that kept him away from them, till the summit of their grief should be reached.

LAZARUS had now lain in the grave four days. O, how still the house seemed! A silence that

spoke constantly of death rested upon everything. Vainly the sisters tried, for each other's sake, to bear up under the depression — MARY, that she might inspire MARTHA with trust in the unchanging love of JESUS, spite of appearances; for she feared, owing to the death of their brother, her faith in the reality of that love was not as strong as of yore: and MARTHA, lest MARY's young life should be too darkly clouded by the sad event.

LAZARUS had often been absent before, frequently for days at a time; but there was always prospect of his return — a joyful home-coming, looked forward to by his sisters with unmixed pleasure. But this time his departure was empty of all promise of re-union. Friends and neighbors would come; but he was gone — to visit them no more! And thus it was that sorrow stayed in that once brightest of homes.

The fourth day was now far advanced, when a friendly hand was laid upon MARTHA's shoulder, and a voice said:

“JESUS has come, and is now outside the city.”

“Our friend sayeth that JESUS is come: I will go and see;” she said to MARY; and arising hastily, she went out.

Glad that MARTHA desired to see the LORD, and wishful that she should first meet him, and should meet him alone, MARY willingly remained in the house. Certain that there would be consolation in his presence, she could wait while MARTHA poured her sorrow into JESUS' ears. Scarcely had MARTHA reached the spot where JESUS stood, than, without waiting for his salutation, she broke forth:

"LORD, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." For days she had tried to be brave, and had controlled herself to a large extent; but now her sorrow burst forth in torrents. Yet as she sobbed out her grief to the Saviour, faith and hope sprang up, and she exclaimed: "but I know that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, He will give it thee."

"Thy brother shall rise again;" said JESUS.

"I know he will, in the resurrection, at the last day;" she responded.

"I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. Believest thou this?"

"Yea, LORD; I do believe."

"Go, call thy Sister; and come, let us go to his tomb."

There was inexpressible comfort in the words and company of JESUS, and she hastened home to MARY with a lighter heart than had been her's for many days.

"The Master has come, and calleth for thee;" she said fondly to MARY; and as she rose to go, the Jews who had come to comfort the mourners followed her.

"She goeth to the grave, to weep there;" they said to each other.

MARTHA lingered for a few moments in the house to make some little preparation for the LORD. Somehow there was expectancy with every touch; a re-living of all her hopes, as she went about removing the emblems of mourning, and pulling the curtains aside to let in the sunshine. JESUS was to

be their guest that evening; and for him she must make every thing as bright as possible. And beside, there was a hope she hardly dare express.

JESUS was waiting for MARY where MARTHA had left him. The disciples were reclining on the grass under a spreading fig-tree; while their Master sat on a stone by the roadside, a little apart from the rest. MARY was soon at the place where JESUS was sitting; but bent with her weight of sorrow, she scarcely raised her tear-dimmed eyes; and not heeding his "Peace be to thee!" she cast herself before him. There was pity in his voice, which soothed her broken spirit; and after the first gush of anguish was over, there came a sweet assurance and a returning strength.

"LORD! if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died;" she said, unknowingly repeating the words of her sister.

What could he say to that sorrowing heart? Her faith and love were strong. She needed no instructing; for had she not sat at his feet, and been taught by him, and laid for her faith a good foundation which no storm could sweep away? Touched to the heart by the mourner's tears, he dropped his head upon his staff and wept with her.

"Where have ye laid him?" he asked, in a voice broken like her own.

"LORD! come and see;" some of the Jews said, who had followed her from the house.

Raising herself from the ground she followed on, comforted by his kind sympathy, and the assurance that her brother, though dead, was still beloved by him. She was stronger now; and for some

reason, she felt that the burden she had borne in silence had rolled away. Ah! she had cast it on JESUS; and as they came to the cave, he groaned with the weight of suffering.

“Take ye away the stone;” he said; but MARTHA, as care-taking as ever, was about to remonstrate.

“Said I not to thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of GOD?” asked JESUS, turning to her.

“True, LORD;” she meekly replied.

So they rolled away the stone; and after a few words of thanksgiving, addressed to his FATHER, JESUS stepped to the entrance of the cave, and looking into its yawning mouth, he said, in a loud voice:

“LAZARUS! come forth!”

O, what a moment of thrilling expectation! All was quiet in the visiting company. Hark! there is a movement inside the cave—a slight, rustling noise! LAZARUS is stirring! And now he comes out, bound hand and foot, precisely as they laid him away!

“Loose him, and let him go;” said JESUS.

Too much astonished to heed the last command, they stood, dazed and bewildered, until JESUS himself stepped to his side and removed the napkin from his face.

“O, my Brother!” said MARY, as she rushed to embrace him. And MARTHA, with joy too deep for words, her eyes shedding copious tears, while her hands trembled with emotion; but even in that supreme moment realizing that something must be

done, began to unbind the fettered arms and feet.

"O, LAZARUS! can it be? can it be?" she said; "it was so hard to give thee up!"

"This is the LORD's doing; and it is marvellous in our eyes;" said some of the Jews.

"Surely, no other but the CHRIST, the SON of the living GOD, could raise the dead that had lain in the grave four days;" responded others.

And as they passed through the gate into the city, a great multitude followed them. All over Bethany, and through Jerusalem, the news flashed like the lightning.

Some were for taking JESUS and making him king at once; but the elders, at every display of his divine power, grew more jealous and hateful. The people were almost beside themselves with excitement; and the Pharisees, realizing that something must be done quickly, immediately called their council together. They shook their heads gravely over the existing state of affairs, and knit their brows in perplexity.

"If we let this Man continue among us, the people, in their haste and enthusiasm, will soon proclaim him king; then the Romans will come, and will take away our place and nation;" they reasoned.

"It is better that one man should die, than that the whole nation should perish, and we be sent into bondage;" said Caiaphas, the high priest; and from that day they sought ways and means to put him to death; nor did they abandon their evil purpose till they succeeded.

Never was home happier than that of Bethany on the night of LAZARUS' return from the sepulchre. Long sat the sisters and talked with their brother and JESUS. We do not know certainly; but it is highly probable they conversed of the time when all the graves will be opened, and the shadows flee away; when the night will be as the day, and the sun shall increase her light seven-fold.

"Who ever knew love like this?" said MARY to MARTHA, that evening, when, having parted for the night from their brother and JESUS, they were in their room alone. "The Master has risked his life to gladden our hearts."

"How could I ever have questioned his friendship?" spake MARTHA. "It maketh me so ashamed when I think of my lack of faith, that I long to hide my face in the folds of his garment, and weep away my guilt."

"Yet he had no words of reproof for thee, my Sister; had he?" said MARY, questioningly.

"Nay, nay; I could have borne that better; but he hath done so bountifully for us, and hath so filled our cup with blessing, until it runneth over, that my heart knoweth not how to express itself for his favors."

"Do not chide thyself so severely;" said MARY, soothingly, as she threw her arms about her sister, who was sitting with great tears in her eyes. "The disciples say it is ever so: that he loveth to bless;" continued MARY; "and only grieves when the people refuse to receive him. JOHN told me this evening how he longed to come to us even before he did; but that the glory might be the

greater, and that there might be no doubt of our brother's death, he stayed away; for thou knowest, Sister, that the unbelieving Jews might have said that LAZARUS was only in a trance, if the loathsome stench from the sepulchre had not convinced them that decomposition had already begun to feed upon him.

"I know it; I know it all. O, to think he hath taken this long journey just for us; and to-night he looked especially weary!"

"PETER says the hatred of the Jews is so bitter against him that he must depart on the morrow, and LAZARUS thinks of going with him;" said MARY. "Those who can be ever near him must be wonderfully blessed;" she continued. "Gladly would I follow him from city to city, over rough roads and burning sands, making the hard ground my couch by night, if I could be always with him; and sweet would be the coarsest bread if it but had his blessing."

Between MARY and JAIRUS' little daughter MIRIAM, there had sprung up a most intimate friendship. The same love and hope had bound them together in mutual sympathy, and one was often the guest at the other's home.

It was on one of these occasions, when MARY was visiting the family of JAIRUS, in Capernaum, that she and MIRIAM sat by the seaside talking of JESUS.

"It was just here," said the sweet young girl, "where he stood one day when he began to teach the people, and the throng became so eager that he stepped into a boat and asked PETER to push

out a little from the land. Just about where thou seest yonder white speck on the wave, was where they drew in a multitude of fishes. Over there, around that curve, was where he fed the five thousand persons; and at that extreme point in the distance, the herd of swine ran violently into the sea and were drowned."

"Lovely JESUS!" said MARY; "chiefest among the many thousands of ISRAEL! always going about doing good: carrying our sorrows, and loading us with blessings! The sweetest lesson I learned at his feet was, that in all his goodness he but reveals to us the love of GOD. 'My FATHER worketh hitherto; now, I work,' he once said; and: 'As the FATHER hath taught me, so I speak.' 'The words are not mine; but his who sent me.' Is it not blessed to know that the great GOD, to whom belongs all power, really loves us; and that all these wonderful cures and blessings which come by JESUS, is but the carrying out of the divine plan of mercy."

"It is even as it was when, a few days before I left home, a number of little children were playing under the fig-tree that groweth by our door. Suddenly there was a piercing scream. 'Run quickly, MARY, and see what is the matter;" said MARTHA, although I was already at the door. A little child had fallen, and pierced itself with an ugly thorn. I removed the offender, bound up the bruise, spoke a few soothing words to the sufferer, wiped the tears away, and soon the little one was laughing and playing with the others, her pain all forgotten. So hath GOD sent his beloved SON to bind up our

broken hearts, and to heal our diseases; and how swiftly JESUS cometh to our relief when he hears us cry."

"Yes," said MIRIAM; "my father was saying, only the other day, that he believed JESUS was sent to us much as a disguised prince. Thou knowest that often our lords send deputies among their subjects to see how they do; and to communicate to them the will and purpose of their lord: so GOD, the great LORD, hath sent his Son JESUS among us, to be a connecting link between the FATHER and ourselves."

"And didst thou ever think how beautiful the intimacy and communion is between the FATHER and the SON? The disciples say that ofttimes JESUS spendeth the whole night in prayer."

"It is indeed beautiful; but it is not strange;" responded MIRIAM. "I know how I love to be with my father: I tell him all my joys and griefs; and though they must often seem childish to him, yet he never turns to me a deaf ear; and how much more will GOD listen to his SON who is a co-worker with him!" There was a moment's pause, and she continued:

"Thou knowest it is written in our holy Scriptures: 'Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth;' but it was always with fear and trembling that I remembered GOD, until I heard JESUS. Every time I read or heard the Law I shivered, as one listening to the thunders of Sinai; but all is so different now I know JESUS. He hath spoken to us of GOD as a kind FATHER. And doth not the royal DAVID say: 'Like as a father pitieth his children,

so the LORD pitieth them that fear him; for he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust.' I well know how dearly my father loves me; and GOD is greater and better than any earthly father. The Master does not deny that JEHOVAH is holy and righteous, as we have ever been taught to believe; nay, he teacheth it. But with the severity of these attributes, he combines the endearing thought of a father's affection. In his prayer, he unites them. Have you never heard him say, when addressing the GOD OF ISRAEL: 'Holy FATHER!' or, 'O, righteous FATHER!' Thus he teacheth us to join the two. But come, let us go to the house; for the night-dews begin to fall."

CHAPTER XIV

How fragrant was the nard with which
Loved MARY gratified her LORD!
His spirit, words and deeds of love,
Sweet-scented, did so well accord.

—*W. Kellaway.*

SPRING-TIME had now returned, with her bright-eyed flowers and lengthening days, and JESUS turns his face toward Jerusalem. LAZARUS had been with him much of the time during the last few months; hence this home-coming was attended with special joy and expectation.

When LAZARUS had sent his sisters word that he, with his beloved Master and the disciples, would reach Bethany in just a week from the date of his writing, it had caused them great pleasure.

MARTHA, dignified as ever, and with her habitual forethought, set about re-arranging the rooms, for the accommodation of her prospective guests. Every thing was made as attractive as taste and love could suggest. Vases were replenished with flowers; furnishings and hangings were brightened anew; and all things seemed to speak welcome and cheer. MARY, sweet and lovely, kept her secret fast locked in her heart: she knew what she would do for JESUS when he came.

In the same little village where these friends of JESUS lived, there dwelt a man who had been a

leper, and whom JESUS had healed. His name was SIMON; and he was distantly related to these sisters and their brother.

"SIMON! the Master and LAZARUS will come in four days, and with them the disciples;" said MARY, one day, to her friend. The old man's eyes lighted up upon hearing the news; for there was ever in his heart great love for JESUS, for the benefit he had received from him.

"He shall be my guest;" he said.

"As thou sayest;" she replied, a little slowly; and then continued: "MARTHA was going to make a feast for them; but"—

"Let the feast be at my house. My rooms are more spacious than thine; and MARTHA can look after the guests, while my servants do her bidding;" he interrupted. "Will that please thee, my child?"

"Most certainly, SIMON;" she answered, in highest good nature and manifest satisfaction.

The party came as announced by letter, and the day of the feast arrived.

Among others who graced this social festival, was MIRIAM, JAIRUS' daughter and MARY's companion. She had come to remain with MARY over Passover-week. The man whom JESUS had healed as he lay at the Pool, nearly three years before, was also there; as likewise the young man who was born blind, but whose eyes JESUS had opened.

Nearly every guest who reclined at the table on this memorable occasion, could bear testimony for JESUS: he had done something for either themselves or their friends. But no one had greater cause for rejoicing than MARTHA and MARY, whose brother

LAZARUS JESUS had raised from the dead. MARTHA had gladly undertaken the entertainment of the guests, as suggested by SIMON; and she thought not of the labor it entailed, in her delight to serve her friends, especially her best friend, JESUS. Fatigue was nothing; service of the Master was now as rest.

Before MARY had left her home to attend the feast, she had taken from her treasures a beautiful box of alabaster. It was of exquisite workmanship, and its snowy whiteness was made to appear even whiter by the streaks of yellow and of red that ran through it. It contained a pound of very precious ointment. She had bought it with the thought of anointing her brother LAZARUS for burial; but wealthy friends had sent such an abundance of perfumery and spices, that it was not needed; so she had kept it for some other use. As she took it in her hand at this time, she remembered the sadness of the event that necessitated its purchase. It was bought to anoint the dead; but now it should anoint the living LORD as her king.

“His name is as ointment poured forth;” she had said to MIRIAM; “so sweet and delightful is his presence; and I will that he receive this honor at my hands who have tasted that sweetness and joy as few others have.”

Drawing near to JESUS, as he reclined at the feast, she broke the box, and poured the contents on his head; and some she let fall on his feet. It ran down his beard, and fell on the folds of his garment, till his whole vesture was saturated with the perfume, and the house was filled with its

fragrance. From his feet it dripped in pearly beads; and MARY, stooping down, took her long beautiful hair, which hung about her shoulders as a vail, and wiped it off. There was no kerchief near; beside, no linen was as soft as her hair: and so she pressed her hanging tresses into service of CHRIST. It gave her joy to do so; deep affection was in the act.

But there was some one to find fault, as there always is when some good work is done. JUDAS, who carried the community purse, containing the earthly means of JESUS and the disciples, desiring to have its weight increased, and thinking more of money than of the comfort of the Master, murmured at such "waste and extravagance"—as he termed it; and said, it would have been better to have sold it, and to have given the proceeds to the poor.

"The poor ye have always with you, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good; but me ye have not always;" said JESUS. "What this woman hath done is for the day of my burial: do not trouble her."

Annoyed that he should be reproved, and with a mind wholly bent on money-getting, JUDAS soon arose and left the feast. Taking the path toward Jerusalem, in gloomy displeasure, he entered the Temple, just as the Sanhedrin were gathered together, consulting how they might put the LORD to death.

"What will ye give me, if I betray him unto you?" said JUDAS. Surprised yet glad that they had found so good an accomplice, they covenanted

with him for thirty pieces of silver. "If he be the CHRIST, let him save himself; if he be not the CHRIST, it is better that he should die;" he said, half to himself, trying to excuse his shameful crime.

How common is the saying: "One half of the world knows not what the other half is doing:" it was thus in this instance. While JUDAS was arranging for the arrest of the Master, the feast at Bethany still continued in unbroken, innocent, yea, holy joy. A traitorous surrender of JESUS was furthest from their thoughts.

"Our Master teacheth that love is the fulfilment of the law;" said JOHN to MARY, later on, as he discerned a trace of sadness because her offering had met with disfavor from even one of the disciples. "I pray thee, be not grieved;" he continued; "for many who come to the LORD have been rebuked by us in ignorance; but JESUS never never forbiddeth any, if love constrain them, no matter how strange their ways may seem to us.

"Didst thy brother tell thee of the mothers who brought their babes to JESUS, to be blessed, whom we forbade? It was near the close of a busy day, when the Scribes and Sadducees were unusually hostile and vexatious; and JESUS was manifestly weary with his day's work. They had come to question him concerning the marriage law; not that they did not understand it, but they would tempt him to say something contrary to the law, or puzzle him that they might boast of victory.

"He was about to answer them, when a woman, carrying a babe, pressed in. The Scribes gathered

more closely around JESUS, haughtily pushing back the mother; so eager were they to catch his words that they might accuse him. Turning herself, she said to me, shyly:

“ ‘I want the Master to bless my child.’

“ ‘Stand back; do not trouble him;’ one of the disciples said, roughly and impatiently. But JESUS had seen the woman, timid, yet longing for his blessing to be given to her offspring; he had heard her words to me; so, leaning forward, waving back the Scribes and Sadducees with a slight movement of his hand, he held out both his arms for the mother to hand him her infant.

“Holding it tenderly and closely; smoothing its forehead and pushing back its curls; the little one looked up full in his face, with that confidence natural to children, and smiled artlessly, in its innocence and joy. A smile like the child’s, as pure and beautiful, came over his own face, as he drew it still closer to him, in unspeakable affection. Ah, MARY! that you could have seen it! Then he said, looking at us:

“ ‘Forbid them not to come to me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.’ ” Then he laid his hand upon its head, and looking upward pronounced upon it a blessing. Encouraged by his act, other mothers who were in the company, and who had until now stood with their infants in their arms, came forward, that he should bless their babes also.

“And so he did. And now thou seest, gentle MARY! that not every one whom the disciples forbid, are forbidden by our gracious LORD; nay, verily; he receiveth all who come to him; and no gift is

too small for his acceptance, if only it be prompted by love."

"What doth our LORD mean by his 'burial?'" said MARY, comforted and cheered by what she had just heard.

"I know not; but it seemeth he is in the shadow of some great trial;" said JOHN thoughtfully.

Two days later LAZARUS, with his sisters, sat alone in the cool of the evening.

"Thou hast not told us, Brother, much of thy journeyings with our beloved LORD, in Perea;" said MARTHA; "we would like to know what thou didst see and hear. Doubtless, wonderful things were done by JESUS."

"Yes, truly, my Sisters; he maketh the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the blind to see, wherever he goeth, and all sickness fleeth at his word. But the sweetness of his presence I cannot tell; it is as wonderful to me as his works. You have felt the mighty influence imparted through contact with a stronger one than yourselves; which comes as silently, yet as forcibly, as the sun's warm rays, though not a word is spoken. So his presence imparts strength and hope everywhere, as here, to the sad and the weary. His company is a continual inspiration."

"I have felt it, my Brother; I have felt it;" said MARY, rapturously. "Yes, in his presence there is fullness of joy; and it seemeth to linger with us like the fragrance of the ointment that I poured upon his head at the feast; even though the sound of his departing footsteps have long since died upon our ears."

"True; sweet Sister!" responded LAZARUS; "but as MARTHA hath requested it, I will narrate briefly the events of our journey.

"Dost thou remember the aged woman whom we met at the Temple one day, who had fallen on the pavement, and seriously injured her spine — which before was badly diseased?"

"I remember her well;" replied MARTHA; "and have seen her since then; for she often cometh to Jerusalem to worship, so devout is she."

"She dwelleth on the farther side of the Jordan; and when we went into the synagogue on the Sabbath, she was there. She was bowed together, and could in no wise lift herself up; but when JESUS saw her sitting behind the lattice in the synagogue, he called her to him. She immediately arose and came to him, walking with two staves, and was so bent over that she could not see his face except as she turned her head on one side; but JESUS, laying his hands on her, said: 'Woman! thou art loosed from thine infirmity.' At the instant she straightened up, and became as palm-like, as beautifully erect as thyself, dear Sister;" he said, looking at MARTHA.

A silence of a few minutes followed, in which each was busy with his and her own thoughts, when LAZARUS continued:

"MARY! thou wilt be rejoiced to hear that BARTIMEUS, the blind beggar, who dwelleth at Jericho, and whom thou hast befriended, hath received his sight."

"Yes, I am indeed glad;" she replied, her face aglow with animation; "for when I was staying

a few days in Jericho with the daughter of Rabbi AMOS, before the Feast of Tabernacles, I saw him almost every day. Rabbi AMOS knew him well, and told me he was a good man, and one who feared God; but that many years ago he became blind.

His son, who was a young man at that time, left Jerusalem, where he was studying under GAMALIEL, and came home to support the family, which had become destitute through BARTIMEUS' affliction; but the youth being tenderly reared, soon gave out under the strain of physical labor and care, and fell a victim to the grave. The grief of his father was great and touching, and he was compelled to resort to begging; by which he has obtained a precarious living. But tell us about him, LAZARUS; for I rejoice for his joy."

"We were just coming into the city, attended by a great multitude;" said LAZARUS. "Some preceded us, while some followed; when I saw a man waving his hand in the air, meanwhile crying aloud: 'JESUS! thou SON OF DAVID! have mercy upon me.' Those who were in advance of us rebuked him, and charged him to hold his peace; but he cried the louder, until JESUS sent JAMES and JOHN to fetch him to him.

"'Be of good comfort; for the Master calleth thee;' said JAMES; and being in great haste to be healed, the man threw aside his cloak, that he might not be impeded in his going. Taking the hand of JAMES, and being conducted by him, he came to JESUS.

"'What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?' said JESUS.

“ ‘LORD! that I may receive my sight.’

“O, MARY! it would have made you shed tears of joy had you seen him as he went with us into the city, leaping and praising GOD. By and by he learned that I was thy brother; and remembering thy kindness to him, he would have me go to his home and lodge for the night. You can imagine the joy of that household, when he came to them seeing. BARTIMEUS himself wept and laughed by turns, as he went from room to room, and showed me the treasures and ornaments of years ago, which he had not beheld for so long. And his children were such a surprise to him, they were so grown! But as he looked upon his wife, pale and worn from constant attendance upon him and anxiety for the family's support — the wife whom he had not seen since early manhood — freshets of tears poured out of his eyes, as he said: ‘Where, beloved Wife! hath the roses gone from thy cheeks? and what hath stolen the brightness from thine eyes; and changed the color of thy hair?’

“ ‘Look at thine own hair, husband!’ she playfully replied, unwilling that aught of regret should mar that joyful occasion.

“ ‘Truly, truly; sorrow and pain have furrowed our cheeks and sprinkled our hair as with hoar frost; but, GOD be praised! there is only one vacant chair at our table to-night;’ he responded. And the sigh for the missing one was chased away by grateful recollections of sight received.”

“Where was JESUS?” asked MARY.

“He had gone to be the guest of ZACCHEUS, the publican.”

MARTHA opened her eyes widely, in great astonishment.

"You may well be surprised;" he continued. "So were we all; but ZACCHEUS is now a disciple of our LORD."

"After BARTIMEUS had been healed, and we had come into the city, the shouts and praises attracted much people, who came out of the market-places or appeared on the house-tops to see the cause of this uproar. I noticed a little man, not much larger than a boy, climbing up a sycamore tree; and as we came near to him, JESUS said:

"'ZACCHEUS! make haste and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house.'

"ZACCHEUS, hearing this, came down immediately, and running to JESUS, received him with great joy and welcome.

"JOHN, who was also a guest with JESUS that night, told me that ZACCHEUS has promised to restore to those whom he has defrauded, fourfold; and I have since heard that our friend BARTIMEUS will receive quite an ample fortune, if he fulfils his word."

"Ah! truly, the religion JESUS teaches makes all crooked things straight;" said MARTHA. "The high are brought low, and the humble are exalted. All are alike to him; and when he shall reign in righteousness, as is predicted, all things will be in common."

"Verily, MARTHA! And he teacheth his followers to be equal even now; indeed he instructed us one day, that he who desired to be greatest must be the servant of the rest."

“While joy generally prevailed as we journeyed with the Master, saw what he did, and heard his words, at times we were made sorrowful. Let me tell you of one instance. In the Temple, I had often observed a young man, wealthy and member of an important family. He is a ruler; and his devout manner and affable behavior, had won my notice; in fact, I loved him; although I never had much conversation with him.

“We had just departed from one of the cities of Perea, when this young ruler followed us. Overtaking us, he saluted JESUS; and as he knelt before him, asked:

“‘Good Master! what shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life?’

“‘Thou knowest the commandments;’ said JESUS.

“‘Yea, LORD! and I have kept them all from my youth up: what lack I yet?’

“I saw a look of sorrow overspread the face of the Master; he seemed almost to dread to give answer to the question propounded, anticipating its effect. Looking with great tenderness and love upon the young ruler, he however said, slowly and with much feeling:

“‘If thou wilt be perfect, go thy way, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven. And come, take up thy cross, and follow me.’

“O, my Sisters! the answer of JESUS was not what the ruler expected: it caused him much distress, because he was rich and loved his money; and he left our LORD without another word.

“Jesus watched him depart, and was himself moved that one so amiable, and in many respects exemplary, yet lacked the love without which none can be saved. Then, addressing us, he said:

“‘How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven.’

“Everywhere JESUS speaks in the same strain concerning riches. While so many labor and deny themselves to gratify the desire for hoarding, the Master constantly teaches the danger that attaches to the possession of wealth. On one occasion he said:

“‘It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.’

“It is not wonderful, then, that the rich rarely become JESUS’ disciples. Yea, his followers are mostly from the poor of this world.”

CHAPTER XV.

O, PRINCE OF PEACE! though Salem's hosts
Would not receive thee for their King,
I hail thee, ruler of my heart!
And thy majestic glory sing.

—*W. Kellaway.*

THE next morning after the feast given at Bethany in honor of JESUS, LAZARUS and his sisters, accompanied by MIRIAM, repaired to the Temple, for worship. MIRIAM had been there on previous occasions; but never before had the Holy City, hallowed with gracious outpourings of GOD's power; nor the Temple, with its beautiful and impressive service, seemed so sacred and awe-inspiring.

Hitherto she had regarded the customs and worship of her forefathers, and the capital city of her people, with a patriotic pride; and thought it a great honor to be a descendant of righteous ABRAHAM. But now pride had left her; and in its place had come love and piety, heartfelt and true. Her state of mind is best told by herself; hence we extract a portion of a letter, written to her father, after her visit to the Temple, on the day just mentioned.

" We wound our way around the southern base of Olivet. It was a beautiful Spring morning; the dew was still upon the grass and flowers. 'The flowers have been weeping;' MARY said to

me; 'see! the tears are still in their eyes!' and it did look so; for there was hardly one but had its little cup full.

"JESUS was with us; but a little in advance of MARY and I. He had earlier sent PETER and ANDREW to Bethphage, to borrow a colt, and upon it he was now riding. Thou knowest our Master seldom rides; but this morning it was his pleasure to enter Jerusalem in 'keeping with the royalty he had claimed for himself.

"As we came to where the road bends around the mount, we caught our first glimpse of the Holy City, situate in the midst of her hills. As I beheld, there recurred to my mind the words of King DAVID: 'As the mountains are round about Jerusalem; so the LORD is 'round about his people, henceforth, even for ever.'

"The castles and walls were first visible; then the Temple, with its glistening domes and roof, resplendent with gold and brass; and the white wall, pierced by its several arches, or gateways. Never were these beauties and glories so sacred to me. But for a moment I forgot their present grandeur, and thought only of the city as it lay in ruins, in the days of the Babylonian captivity, when Nehemiah began to build its walls. I could almost see the enemies as they surrounded the laborers, while they wrought in the work of building with one hand, and held a weapon of defence in the other—ready at any moment to run together to battle at the call of the trumpet. Truly, it was built in 'troublous times,' as prophesied; but out of the dust of that devotion, reproach and

self-denial arose our beautiful city — a city with a history more varied than any other.

“Still farther back than all this, I saw our city as the home of King DAVID; and yet more glorious did it become under the reign of SOLOMON, his son; when the Queen of Sheba thought it worth her while to leave her realm, and with her train of camels bearing abundance of gold and spices, and accompanied by a great retinue, to travel for days that she might see the majesty of this kingdom, of which she had heard almost fabulous accounts.

“And how familiar was every spot of this ground to the Prophet SAMUEL! and afterwards to JEREMIAH, whose grotto, where he lamented the fall of Jernsalem, is pointed out to us at this day!

“O, my Father! what sweet and sad memories cluster around this hallowed city! While I still look upon it with a degree of pride, yet my weeping eyes see in its beauties the labors and tears of our devoted fathers. And now I hear the clashing of spears, and see the armed Roman horsemen. What meaneth this? Are we again to be brought into bondage?

“But this morning, as we entered Jerusalem with JESUS, it was with unusual demonstration. The roads, as they always are at Passover-time, were thronged with people; but it seemed the crowd was denser than usual. JOHN said, many of the people had come to see and hear JESUS.

“As we neared the city, we saw as great a company coming out of the gate as that which had gathered and were following us. I questioned PETER as to what it meant; for he always seems to

know the things concerning which I desire information; and he said he thought they had come out to meet JESUS. And surely they had; for no sooner did they see him, than they began to shout: 'Hosanna, to the Son of DAVID! Blessed is he, the King of Israel, that cometh in the name of the LORD! Peace on earth, and glory in the highest!'

"We were near a cluster of palms, the branches of which are generally used at the Feast of the Tabernacles, and the people began cutting them down; and while they spread some on the ground before JESUS, they waved others above their heads, and over the Master. Some, not to be outdone by the rest, took off their outer garments, and spread them in the way. There was no paved roadway for this King of Israel; no blazoned banners nor standards; but those palms, nature's emblems of victory, spoke the people's sentiments; while the glad chorus, not unlike that sung by the angels at JESUS' birth, was sweeter far than any martial music ever awakened by the most skilled lips. At least, it seemed so to us; who felt that the long-expected moment had really come, and that our LORD was now about to be crowned king.

"We tried to catch a sight of JESUS; but he was hidden from us by the people. Those who did see him, said he sat on the ass he was riding as meek and quiet as ever, very little affected by the enthusiasm of the people. But thou knowest, Father! that he is kingly even in his humility; so withal, his dignity and majesty shone forth. As we came near to the city, those who were beside him said, an expression of deep sorrow pervaded

his features. Great tears moistened his eyes and rolled down his cheeks, and soon his whole frame quivered with emotion.

“ ‘Master! thou art troubled;’ said JOHN, his beloved disciple, who always keeps close to him; but he did not heed his words, although he must have heard them. He looked upon our Holy City, now fully in sight, and said, in tremulous tones:

“ ‘If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children with thee; and they shall not leave one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.’

“ ‘Thus we entered Jerusalem, my dear Father. But the rulers of the Jews were angry, and said one to another: ‘Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him!’ and though the common people would have received him, the nobles and rulers were against him.

“ ‘O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how oft would I have gathered you together, as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings; but ye would not;’ he said that evening, as with a few of his disciples he was returning to Bethany, and stopped a moment on the brow of Olivet, for a last lingering view of the Capital ere the hills hid it from their sight.

“O, Father! these words of our dear LORD impress me most deeply; and I feel with him that some great trial is about to come upon us. I trust that thou wilt hasten to us at once; for if JESUS be taken away, what shall we do? But, then, how can evil come to him who hath so great power, and who is to be our king? — for such I believe he will one day be.”

As this letter intimated, there was a dark, dark cloud resting upon the disciples — a kind of presentiment that something momentous was about to take place. They could not reconcile the things the LORD had told them about his suffering with their high hopes; therefore, strange to say, they almost unconsciously disregarded his words; or at least, tried to bring them into harmony with their own longings and preconceived ideas.

But now he had added to the fact of his suffering — which so pained and perplexed them — the prophecy that their beloved city should be overthrown; so they became very desirous of making special inquiry concerning it. They had caught the idea from his plain, simple teaching, that when the kingdom was established, then all iniquity would be abolished, and that this world would enter upon a new dispensation. He had told them, in parabolic language, that the “harvest” would be at the “end of the world;” that the “reapers” would be the “angels;” and that when they “gather out of the kingdom all things that offend,” “then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their FATHER.” This thought was as yet implanted very imperfectly in their minds;

but as JESUS had so clearly connected the final consummation of all things with the establishment of his kingly power, they sought opportunity to make further inquiry about this also.

Since JESUS' appearance in Jerusalem, the Scribes and Pharisees had demanded so much of his time, that the disciples had had little or no private teaching from him. One day, however, as they were returning to Bethany, somewhat earlier than usual, JESUS sat down on the side of Mount Olivet to rest. Only four of his disciples were with him; and as they sat there, looking at the magnificent Temple, whose glittering roofs and gates seemed all ablaze — burnished by the setting sun — heard the voices of the priests as they chanted the Psalms of DAVID, and saw the smoke of the evening sacrifice already beginning to ascend; while below them, within and without the city, were hundreds of little white tents pitched, to accommodate the worshippers, they were absorbed in thought.

As they had left the Temple, they had called JESUS' attention to the porches, with their stately pillars, inlaid ceiling, and marble pavement; the gates, one of them of solid Corinthian brass; and the massive stones of which the walls were built; and he had said, sadly:

"Verily, I say unto thee: The days shall come when not one stone shall be left upon another;" so as they sat looking upon it now, they mused upon CHRIST's words.

"Tell us, Master! when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" said one.

Glad that they had sought to understand, he at once began to narrate the events that would cluster around the destruction of Jerusalem; and later, the signs that would precede his second coming.

He tells them false Christs would arise; wars, earthquakes, famines and pestilences occur; that they would be hated and persecuted for his sake, and be killed—but “this gospel of the kingdom must first be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come;” he added. After the great tribulation, which would sweep away so many of his followers, he tells them that the sun would be darkened; the moon not give her light; the stars fall from heaven; men’s hearts fail them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.” “And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven;” and he shall come with power and great glory; and with all the holy angels.

“When ye see all these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh;” he said; and thus he revealed to them the mysteries of the kingdom as they were able to receive them, unfolding the secrets leaf by leaf, as a flower unfolds her petals.

To the disciples, JESUS meant just what he said. The Prophets had used figures and symbols; but JESUS taught them as we teach little children, using phrases and words that need no interpretation; and while they were satisfied with what they had heard in answer to their questions, yet they were sad and disappointed that their hopes were not to be immediately realized.

CHAPTER XVI

"LORD! is it I?" Ah! think my soul,
A follower gave him up to die!
Will I sell out His cause and name?
Most anxious word, "LORD! is it I?"
—*W. Kellaway.*

THE evening for partaking of the Passover-meal was now present, and all things were ready for the observance of the ordinance. As the night shadows began to lengthen, JESUS assembled with the Twelve. They had left home and all for him; they had followed him through all his mission; they had been his comfort, as a helpless infant is a comfort to its bereaved mother; they were "his own," and he "loved them to the end."

Ah, yes! they had faults, as a child has faults; but does the parent cease to love, because of the mistakes of childhood? No, no! father and mother excuse their children, as best they can. They say: "They will know better, by and by;" and go on patiently teaching and loving all the while—"line upon line, and precept upon precept; here a little, and there a little;" until manhood is reached, and the follies of youth are passed.

Just so did JESUS bear with and love his disciples—teaching them by illustration and example the higher and deeper truths of perfection; excusing them by saying: "Ye know not what spirit ye

are of"—ye have not yet learned to discriminate between good and evil. PETER! rash, impetuous and erring: first to declare his faith, and first to deny it at the critical moment; but always penitent and sincere. JOHN, youngest of all the disciples, a mere youth beside the others, but a favorite with all—one whose being was love; not burning and enthusiastic like PETER's, but confiding and clinging. THOMAS, thoughtful and slow to believe; never very ardent, yet true to his convictions. JAMES, brother of JOHN, quiet but bold, with judgment well balanced; and the others, with all their human imperfections and frailties, but at heart true and noble: all, save one—alas! that there was a single traitor in the group!—were dear to the heart of JESUS.

"With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you, before I suffer;" he said, as he reclined at the table, and took up the cup to give thanks.

Arising after the drinking of the wine, he washed his hands, as was the custom before the roasted lamb was tasted, and desiring once more to manifest his love for them, and show his character of "servant," though he was their Lord and Master, he girded himself with a towel, and taking a basin of water, began to wash their tired, dusty feet. He knew the thorns and briars had wounded them in their long march for the last three years; he knew the weary miles they must yet travel when he should be taken from them—when few would pity and minister to them; so he bowed before them, and lovingly and tenderly bathed their feet, wiping them with the towel with which he was

girded; as he would in coming days, bathe their crushed and bleeding hearts with the refreshing dews of his grace.

“As I, your LORD, have washed your feet; ye ought also to wash one another’s feet. He that is greatest among you, shall be the servant of all;” he said, as he finished. There was silence for a few minutes, in which he seemed very sorrowful; when, finally, he continued: “Verily, verily, I say unto you: That one of you which eateth with me, shall betray me.”

O! this was a new and fearful disclosure; and the disciples looked up in astonishment at their LORD, and from one to another, anxiously. How their hearts trembled! Could it be that they were deceived in themselves? All but one felt the pang; and questioned, sincerely and boldly: “Is it I?” But he, with bowed head and face crimsoned with confusion, hardly knowing what he said, but desiring to be like the rest, asked, almost in a whisper: “Is it I?”

“Thou hast said;” said JESUS, in the same low tone — so softly that no one heard the answer save he to whom it was addressed.

PETER, realizing his own impetuosity, and fearing lest a careless or thoughtless word of his should bring trouble to his LORD; and at the same time with rising indignation toward the traitor, whomsoever he might be, could endure the suspense no longer; therefore he motioned to JOHN, whose posture at the table was such that his head rested upon the breast of JESUS, to ask him of whom he spake.

"LORD! who is it?" whispered that loved disciple to the Master.

"It is he to whom I shall give the sop, when I have dipped it;" answered JESUS, at the same time handing a piece of moistened bread to JUDAS ISCARIOT.

"That thou doest, do quickly;" he said to JUDAS, a moment later, as that unworthy disciple got up and left the table; but no one knew, except JOHN, what JESUS meant; the rest supposed that he alluded to the bestowment of some gift upon the poor, as JUDAS carried the bag, and generally bought the necessary articles for such charities.

"Little children! yet a little while I am with you; ye shall seek me;" he said, knowing how their fond hearts would mourn in his absence; "but as I said to the Jews, 'Whither I go, ye cannot come;' so now I say to you."

The Disciples were slow to understand what this "going away" meant. To be sure, he spoke of "death;" but for all that they could not associate the dark, silent tomb, nor the dreamless, unconscious sleep, with their glorious Master; so they concluded among themselves that he would in some way escape from his enemies, and hide among the dispersed tribes or alien nations, until the wrath of the Jews was spent; therefore PETER said:

"LORD! whither goest thou?"

"Whither I go, ye cannot follow me now;" replied JESUS.

"Why cannot I follow thee now?" he questioned in surprise; "I will lay down my life for thy sake."

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee: The cock shall

not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice;" he said.

Ignorant of his own weakness, PETER asserted a second time his faithful adherence to his Master, under all circumstances: "Though all men should forsake thee; yet will I never be offended."

"SIMON, SIMON!" he said, sadly; "behold, SATAN hath desired to have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."

"LORD! I am ready to go with thee, both to prison and to death;" he still insisted.

"Verily, I say unto thee, PETER;" JESUS replied, with his eyes fixed upon him in great earnestness; "that this day, even in this night, before the cock shall crow twice, thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me."

"Though I die with thee, yet will I not deny thee in any wise;" he boldly declared, with exceeding vehemence.

The Master had no further answer for him — time would prove all things.

As they had now partaken of the entire Pass-over, JESUS decided to leave them a still simpler feast, which they should eat in remembrance of himself. A loaf of bread broken into bits, to represent his body, which should be broken; and a cup of wine, emblematical of his blood, about to be poured out, he now blessed, and set before them. While they partook of the cup, JESUS said: "I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of GOD."

Great sorrow and gloom were now settling down upon this little band—the gloom darker than night itself. So sad were they that their tongues refused to utter the language of their burdened hearts; so they sat in silence, listening to JESUS as he spoke, interposing only an occasional question.

“Be not troubled;” he said, comfortingly; “just as surely as I go, I will come again, and will receive you unto myself. There are many mansions where my FATHER abideth, and I go to prepare them for you: but I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you, and will manifest myself unto you.”

“LORD! how wilt thou manifest thyself to us, if thou goest away?” one said.

“The Comforter, which is the HOLY GHOST, whom the FATHER will send in my name, and whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, he shall abide with you forever; and shall bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you;” he answered, and then continued: “My peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you. Be not troubled; neither be afraid. In the world, ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. As the FATHER hath loved me, so have I loved you; and the FATHER himself loveth you. Therefore, whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, he shall give it you; so ask, that your joy may be full. Hereafter I can not talk much with you. Arise! let us go hence.” So they sang a hymn, and went out—sang when their hearts were about to break; sang when hope had fled and the heavens grew black above them;

sang when lips trembled and eyes were dim with tears — so they sang with JESUS; his rich, mellow voice leading their faltering, broken ones, as they ceased now and again to choke back the sobs that unbidden issued from their broken hearts; for men, even strong-hearted men, will sometimes weep.

Passing out of the city in that calm, still night, with his eleven Apostles, and crossing the brook Cedron, on their way to Gethsemane, he called their attention to a vine growing close to their path.

“Behold!” said he, stopping a moment and pointing to it; “I am like this vine; ye are the branches; and my FATHER is the husbandman. If ye abide in me, as the branch in the vine, ye shall bear much fruit.” Beautiful thought! the branch may bear the fruit; but the vine bears the branch, and the FATHER loveth and tendeth them both.

They were now nearing the Garden of Gethsemane. JESUS was aware he had passed out of the city and over the brook for the last time before being arrested, bound, and almost dragged back to the city for judgment; but just now he sorrowed not for himself; his grief and anxiety were for the disciples he was about to leave — “little children,” he had called them. He had gathered them about him as a dying father calls his children to his bedside; he had told them that his going away was for their sakes — to prepare them a home, and that he would surely come back again; that they should not be left comfortless, nor alone, in his absence, but he would send them a substitute; that because

they were greatly beloved of the FATHER, they might ask and expect great gifts from him; that he had left an unfinished work for them to complete, and so tried to awaken in their hearts an inspiration to labor. "Be not afraid; let not your hearts be troubled"—he had repeated; but now, in the recesses of that Garden, while the pale moon threw over all her silvery light and cast her lengthening shadows, still feeling their sorrows, he throws himself upon the ground and prays—prays for them.

"O, FATHER! keep them; sanctify them; make them one, even as we are one; that the world may see that thou hast loved them even as thou hast loved me." Still the prayer went on; and a calm and gentle hush fell upon their troubled spirits.

It was now past midnight. The eleven disciples, calmed and comforted, had fallen asleep, and JESUS was left alone. He who had watched with others had no one to watch with him; he who had wiped the death-dew from others' brows, had no one to wipe the great drops from his own forehead; he who had prayed for others, had no one to pray for him: he must tread the wine-press "alone." He had commenced alone in the desert; and now he must finish alone in the garden. He knew that in one short hour, cruel hands would bind him; he foresaw the mocking and the scourge; he already felt by anticipation the heavy cross and shame; and all his tender nature and manhood shrank from the coming blow.

"O FATHER! if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;" he groans; "nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." The disciples still sleep on—

even PETER, JAMES and JOHN, the especially beloved, are unconscious of his agony.

“O, my FATHER! if it be possible, if thou art willing, take this cup from me;” he pleads again, and as he, kneeling, leans against a friendly tree, with closed eyes and clasped hands, the cold waves chase each other over the trembling body and he sinks to the ground.

A second time he comes to his disciples: they are still sleeping; and when he calls them they answer him vaguely, as if in a dream. Once more — just once more — he casts himself before God. In the distance he sees the flickering lights of approaching torches, and his burdened heart, with one bound seems about to burst; the next moment he experiences a deathly faintness. His heaving chest and ashen face tell of inexpressible sorrow; while great drops of sweat, mingled with blood, roll from his forehead to the ground.

“O, my FATHER!” he groans, in broken accents, “if this cup may not pass, except I drink it, thy will be done.” Almost unconscious, in extreme agony, his head drops upon his laboring breast, and his body sways as if falling; but as he is ready to swoon, an angel is beside him, bearing him up. Strengthened and relieved by his heavenly visitor, he arises from his knees, folds his garment about him, and with firm tread approaches his sleeping disciples.

“Rise up; let us go: lo! he that betrayeth me is at hand;” he said, laying his hand upon them and awakening them. The bitterness of death had passed; and like a hero he confronts his enemies.

They had come with torches, staves and cords, as if to take a bandit, or tyrant, who would make a determined resistance: torches to search him out, should he hide; staves to compel his surrender, if he resisted; and cords to bind his hands and feet, that he might not get away when captured. Moving stealthily and cautiously, to surprise him in his retreat, they came to a sudden halt, as he stepped before them with the question:

“Wherefore art thou come?”

JUDAS, full of hypocrisy and deceit, now came to his side, and throwing one arm over his shoulders, kissed his cheek.

“Betrayest thou the SON OF MAN with a kiss?” he said, turning to JUDAS. No answer! and he questions further:

“Whom seek ye?”

“JESUS, of Nazareth;” some one replied.

“I am he!” said JESUS, advancing a step.

JUDAS had expended all his courage in that kiss of betrayal; so now, as JESUS approached, he fell back. The same fear and awe came over them all.

They had come to attack; not to be attacked. They had planned a surprise; not to be surprised. They were prepared to fight; but no violence was offered, nor resistance made. Hardly knowing how to commence proceedings, they stood for a second as under a spell; then reeled back, and fell to the ground.

Who can tell what they saw, as they looked upon that meek and holy Man standing so grandly before them? The GOD who had three times before uttered from the heavens his divine blessing

upon this beloved Son, perhaps now set an angel in the way, as he did in the days of BALAAM: or it may be, he hedged his ANOINTED round about with horses and chariots of fire, as he once did ELISHA.

But their discomfiture was only momentary; for this was their hour and day of judgment; so Heaven must withdraw her troops, that opposing humanity may temporarily triumph.

"Whom seek ye?" again he asked; and again they reply:

"JESUS, of Nazareth."

"I have told you that I am he; if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way;" he answered, waving his hand toward his disciples.

PETER was all afire now with zeal, and seeing his beloved Master about to be bound, and also remembering his promise that he would lay down his life for his sake, said:

"LORD! shall I smite with the sword?" Not waiting for an answer, he drew his weapon, and cut off the high priest's servant's ear. Ah, PETER! it is easier to fight, than to endure; it is easier to labor, than to wait and watch.

"SIMON! put up thy sword into the sheath;" JESUS said, looking with mingled displeasure and sadness upon his zealous disciple, and at the same time replacing the severed and bleeding member, he healed it with a touch. There was no word of thanks from the servant, nor praise from the multitude, for this last act of kindness; but only a drawing of the cords still tighter, over and around those tender wrists, until the veins stood out and the hands grew cold and numb.

With rough hand the officers push him before them, while a soldier, armed with a staff ready to club him to death should he resist, pulled him along with brutal rudeness.

"To the HIGH PRIEST!" one and another cried; while others shouted: "TO PILATE! TO PILATE!" and still others: "TO ANNAS!"

"Yes; to ANNAS! To ANNAS, first!" they cried, in concert; so on they went, pulling and pushing from before and behind; the frightened disciples following at a distance.

The darkness of night was the fittest time to execute such cruel purposes; so without waiting for morning, they proceeded at once with the trial; which throughout mocked all that was lawful and just. In the court of the house, during the trial, the soldiers had kindled a fire, and stood before it warming themselves; for the night was cold. PETER had also gained admittance, and stood with them, feeling perplexed, ashamed, and somewhat injured that his service of defence had not been more gratefully accepted by the Master.

Not far from him, by the entrance, there was a maid, keeping the door. She had watched him, as he gloomily stood with the others, and finally said to him:

"Art thou not one of this Man's disciples?"

"Woman! I am not: I know not the Man;" he said, looking up quickly; and then he went out into the porch. The cool air fanned his troubled brow, knit into numerous wrinkles, and somewhat calmed his rash enthusiasm, while he leaned against the door-post, and heard unheeding the

neighboring cock giving his warning note. Feeling the evening's chill, he was about to return to the fire, when a hand was laid upon his shoulder, and a voice said, inquiringly:

"Thou also art one of them" (?)

"Man! I am not;" he replied, as he turned abruptly, and fiercely shook off the hand.

"Surely, thou art one of his disciples; for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech betrayeth thee;" said another.

"Did not I see thee in the Garden?" interrupted a third, as PETER was about to answer his former accuser.

"I know not what thou sayest. I know not this Man of whom ye speak;" he declared, with vehement oaths and curses.

His old nature, so long kept down by the overpowering love and tenderness of the Master, had now asserted itself; and he, angered that he should be subjected to such criticism, stood defiantly before them all.

Just then was heard a rattling of armor; a few lighted torches appeared; and JESUS was being hurried rudely along.

The Master knew all about the anger of PETER. He saw still stamped upon his face the traces of indignation and wrath; but there was no time for words, indeed words of any kind were unfitting for such a time and place; and he who knows best how to soften a stony heart, and quench an angry flame, turned and looked upon PETER; while at the same instant the cock crowed! That was enough: there was volumes in that look; it went

straight to his disciple's heart. He felt it, more than saw it; and going out into the darkness he wept bitterly.

PETER's confident assertion of fidelity to CHRIST even to death, had not been made good. He had even proved unequal in trial to the maintenance of his profession of discipleship; yea, he had gone a step further than that, he had denied absolutely any knowledge of JESUS. He who had lived with the Master in closest intimacy for years had sworn he was not acquainted with him. So far had his weakness let him down. Yet the inward persuasion of his heart, that JESUS was the CHRIST, had not failed; and a single look from JESUS awoke within him true contrition for his sin.

PETER's apostasy is a lesson to all, saying: "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

CHAPTER XVII

The price of our release was paid
When JESUS was on Calvary slain;
And all, in penitence and faith,
May come, their freedom to obtain.

—*W. Kellaway.*

MORNING had now dawned, bright and clear, and through the crisp Spring air JESUS was hurriedly taken to PILATE. Condemned by the Sanhedrin, they gave sentence that he be put to death; but they could not execute the penalty without first obtaining the sanction of the Roman Governor; so they hurried to PILATE with their victim. The Governor however, finding no fault in JESUS, was unwilling to give the requisite authority for his execution; but hearing that he was from Galilee, he sent him to HEROD, who was then visiting at Jerusalem; who after a brief examination, returned him again to PILATE. Was there then no one to condemn him, but they of his own household? Meek and submissive he stood in the presence of the Roman Governor, who sought to release him, yet feared to offend the Jews.

"I have found no fault in the Man, worthy of death," he said; "neither has HEROD; I will therefore chastise him, and release him."

"No; crucify him! crucify him!" they cried out.

"Ye have a custom that I should release unto you one at the Passover: whom will ye that I release — BARABBAS, or JESUS?" he asked; yet indisposed to punish the guiltless.

"Away with this Man, and release unto us BARABBAS;" they shouted.

Still hesitating to give sentence, and thinking they might relent, should they see him chastised and smarting with pain, he gave orders that he should be scourged.

Down the marble stairway JESUS was now led, into a cold, dark subterranean chamber, lighted only by the glimmering torches. Rough hands pulled off his outer and under robes, so that his back was laid bare to the cruel lash; while his hands were bound to a low post before him, that he might bow to receive the strokes. The scourge was then brought, made of thongs of leather tipped with lead and iron wire. Blow after blow was laid upon the tender bent back, and the thongs encircled his body with stinging effect. O, GOD! could humanity be so inhuman! How the blood spurts out, and the flesh quivers! He shrinks from the fast-coming blows and in agony falls to the ground, only to spring forward again, as the soldiers with glaring eyes and flushed faces applied the lash still harder! Still the whipping goes on, until a hundred wounds weep great drops of blood!

Led into the common hall, with back bleeding, they threw a purple robe around him in cruel mockery; and in his hands, bound fast together, they placed a reed for a scepter. But even this is not enough — he must be crowned; so they brought

a wreath of thorns — great, sharp thorns over an inch long — and pressed it upon his brow. The blood trickled down his cheeks and clotted his beard. No friendly hand was near to wipe it away; and his own were corded, so that he could not raise them, if he would.

“Hail! King of the Jews!” they said, in mock humility, as they did obeisance before him, and paid him sham homage.

“He would be King;” others said, sneeringly; at the same time slapping his cheek, and pulling his beard; while still others offered additional indignity by spitting in his face. Not a murmur, nor sign of resistance did he manifest. As they led him forth to PILATE, he presented a most pitiful spectacle. The broken reed was still in his hands; the thorns still on his head; while around him, and clinging to the drying and swelling wounds, the purple robe yet hung. Those eyes that could weep for others’ grief are tearless under his own suffering; but down the lines of his face, drawn deep by anguish, coursed the crimson blood fresh from the wounds on his forehead.

“Behold the Man!” said PILATE, as he brought him before the angry rabble. But they, as blood-thirsty as ever, and as pitiless, cried out, with renewed fury:

“Crucify him! crucify him!”

Still PILATE continued to plead, and still the Jews demanded his life; until at last, wearied with their persistent clamor, he took the judgment-seat and gave sentence that JESUS should be crucified. Having obtained their wish, their cruelty doubled.

Cheers and shouts, at their shameful victory, rose from the same multitude that a few days before would have proclaimed JESUS king.

"The same multitude;" did we say? Not exactly: not the same individual persons; but men of the same household. The crowd who now leaped and shouted their triumph over innocence, was composed of priests, scribes, rulers of the people, and officers—the higher classes, from whom greater dignity was to have been expected; while those of the week before, who cried "Hosannah!" and strewed palms before him, were the common people.

It was almost high noon, and his crucifixion and death must take place before sun-down, so no time was to be lost. While some hastened to make ready the cross and to prepare the stupefying mixture, others led the doomed Man back to the judgment-hall, where he was again clothed in his own vesture.

O! where were JESUS' friends in this dark hour?

Scattered, like frightened sheep when the shepherd is taken from them. With blanched faces, they had spread the sad news from one to another.

"JESUS is apprehended, and is now before PILATE;" said JOHN, to LAZARUS and his two sisters, that same morning. "We fear he will be condemned, so bitter is the hatred of the Jews against him; and they have brought many false witnesses to prove him worthy of death." LAZARUS dropped his head with sorrow; while MARY, with streaming eyes, ran away to tell MIRIAM.

"Can nothing be done to stop the cruel execution; or, at any rate, to alleviate his sufferings?" said MARTHA.

"Nothing, my Sister! nothing;" said LAZARUS, sadly. "The Roman soldiers stand guard to see that he suffers the extreme tortures that their law inflicts upon criminals."

"Let us, at least, hasten to Jerusalem, that we may be near him, so that he may have our sympathy;" she said, as she arose and prepared to go.

"Dost thou not think that at the last he will show his miraculous power and save himself?" said LAZARUS.

"I know not," replied JOHN; "how he is to restore all things, and sit on DAVID's throne as king of Israel, and yet be punished unto death; I cannot understand it."

"It may be that by death he meant that he would hide himself in some far country, and return to us when the indignation of our rulers is past."

"We had thought so; but last night at the Passover he told us plainly that he would be crucified; and once before he said: 'As JONAH was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale; so the SON OF MAN shall be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.'"

Thus did they try to harmonize and explain his teachings, as they hastened on their way to Jerusalem.

"O, Brother! see!" cried MARY, seizing LAZARUS' arm. "Can it be? Is JESUS being led away to death so soon?" and a sickening dread came over her, as she again exclaimed: "LAZARUS!" and

clutched his arm still tighter. Supporting his sister, they quickened their steps, keeping in view the procession going to the place of execution, and drawing nearer to it with every step.

Finally they came up with it, and their grief was increased by what they saw. There was JESUS, his face bleeding and begrimed by dust, bearing upon his shoulders the heavy end of a huge cross, while the other end dragged along the ground. Half carrying and half dragging it, he moved along, urged to a quicker pace by the blows and threats of the soldier-guards. Beside him was a lad, carrying a small box of spikes and a hammer; and still another, bearing a pail of stupefying drink, and a long pole, with a sponge tied at one end. This was the only merciful feature in all the arrangements — this potion to dull the senses, and thereby lessen sensibility of the pain.

It would take stouter hearts than those of the women who now looked upon JESUS in his agony, to endure the sight unmoved. MARTHA, self-possessed as she usually was, turned away her head weeping; MIRIAM sobbed aloud in her father's arms; while MARY sat down by the roadside, her face hid in her hands and her body shaking with emotion. The multitude had halted for a few moments; for JESUS had sunk beneath the too heavy cross.

Faint from the loss of blood, and his long unbroken fast; and exhausted by the load he carried, and the sun's unpitying rays; JESUS had fallen unconscious to the ground; but the guards, unwilling to be detained, compelled a Man of Cyrene to carry the cross to the place of crucifixion; while

two of the soldiers, who roughly supported the King of Israel, led him immediately behind it.

His agony and faintness, great as they were, did not make him entirely oblivious of those around him. Looking, he saw women by the roadside, whom he recognized as friends: they were shedding tears. It was the first sign of sympathy he had seen, and he appreciated that fellowship with his sufferings.

"Daughters of Jerusalem! weep not for me: but weep for yourselves and for your children; for if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in a dry?" said he; and returning courage and strength were his, as he looked fondly upon them.

There were also two malefactors led out with him to be put to death; and soon the company reached the place of execution.

The crosses were thrown upon the ground on the brow of the hill Calvary, and a stern soldier laid hold of JESUS.

"Come on!" said a harsh voice; and JESUS responded with obedience.

Stripped of all his clothing, except a cloth girded about the loins, JESUS was now thrown down upon the cross. Extending an arm upon each end of the cross-piece, a cruel spike was driven through each tender palm of the hand. The blood spurted out, as the hammer sent the nail home; and the flesh quiveringly drew back, while the muscles contracted, cramped in agony. Pulling up the knees — those knees calloused by long kneeling in prayer — until the soles of his feet rested upon the wood, and with one over the other, one huge spike

was driven through both. Hardly a groan escaped his lips; but the set jaws, the tightly compressed lips, the closed eyes and heaving chest, told only too plainly how great was the pain. Pulling and dragging the heavy piece of wood along with its tortured victim, they came to a deep hole in the earth, and with one tremendous effort they raised it up, and let it fall, with sudden jerk, into the pit dug for its reception. The flesh tears, the blood flows afresh, and for the first time, an audible and deep groan escapes the lips of the "Man of sorrows."

"FATHER! forgive them; they know not what they do;" the crucified CHRIST exclaims, excusing and pleading for his enemies, even in this sorest of extremities.

When the other victims had been nailed to their crosses, and the crosses set in their places—one on either side of JESUS—the soldiers went their way, leaving only a small guard to watch, until the sufferers should breathe their last.

Curiosity induced many to draw near and look at the wretched men; but the one who attracted the most attention was the central figure: he afforded them more than common interest. As the spectators stopped before the cross of JESUS, many commented upon his life and teaching. There were those who said: "He was a good man;" others told of his preaching; and others still related some incident of his mission among them—of his healing the sick, raising the dead, and the like.

"Of what evil was he then accused, if he did so much good?" asked a stranger.

"He is a deceiver;" replied a priest, surlily, and further remarked: "he maketh himself to be the SON OF GOD."

"If thou be the SON of GOD, come down from the cross;" said another priest, addressing JESUS, and twisting his lip scornfully.

"He saved others; himself he cannot save;" chuckled a ruler, as he passed along. So they derided him and laughed at his misery.

His friends were also present; but they stood farther away, in little groups. Doubt and fear mingled in their hearts, like bitter herbs in a cup; but in the depths of their being was a true love, causing them to suffer in the sufferings of their Master. They had few words for each other: what was there they could say? They had known him so well, and had loved him much; they had trusted entirely in him, and even now they hoped he would save himself.

MARY, the mother of JESUS, was in the group nearest the cross; and beside her, leaning on his staff, was JOHN, the beloved disciple.

His Mother was in great grief; as it were, a sword pierced her soul. She leaned, in her weakness, upon MARY of Magdala. It was more than she could endure without paroxysms, to behold her dear Son dying in such agony. She had sometimes thought him rash in his ministry, and disapproved of his severe denunciations against the Scribes and Pharisees; but he was a child of so much hope and promise; and now every hope was dark with disappointment and shame. Beside he was her son—her first-born child. She re-

membered his childish prattle—how she had climbed with him the hills of Nazareth, a bright-eyed, fair-haired youth; how they together gathered the sweet blooming flowers, and talked of the glory of GOD. She also remembered what a comfort and support he was to her in her widowhood, toiling to maintain her when she was bereaved of JOSEPH, her husband: always dutiful, always affectionate. Again and again her grief gave vent to itself in hysterical sobs, accompanied by floods of tears.

The pitying eye of JESUS was upon her; and, forgetting his own agony, he thought of hers.

“Woman! behold thy Son!” he said to her, with allusion to JOHN, thus committing her to his care as his foster-mother.

Then addressing JOHN, he said: “Behold thy mother!”

It was enough: JOHN understood the Master, and accepting the charge, he tenderly assisted the distressed MARY, conducting her to his own house, which became henceforward her home.

A dimness now began to settle over the entire country—the sun rolled on in his course; but a yellowish gloom had covered the face of nature, which increased in density till a positive darkness prevailed. Few stopped now at the cross. All faces took on an expression of dread of some terrible, impending event; and voices were hushed to a whisper. Deeper and deeper grew the blackness; but the cross on which JESUS hung was made visible by flashes of lightning, which appeared in the sky above the head of the dying sufferer.

"Vengeance is meted out to him;" some said.

"Nay; but the sun hides his face, and throws a pall over the land while this Man dies;" said others.

"My GOD! my GOD! why hast thou forsaken me?" moaned JESUS, a spasm of pain seizing him at the instant.

He makes another effort to speak, and cries: "I thirst."

One soldier, a little kinder than the rest, filled a sponge, affixed to the end of a pole, with the stupefying mixture which they had brought, and put it to his lips that he might drink. A taste was sufficient; and JESUS turned away his head,

There was relief in the next tone — almost a note of joy — as he opened his eyes, and in a voice loud and clear, said: "It is finished."

A tremor passed over his entire body: he gasped, deeply and quickly. Every eye was now turned upon him — this was the last moment of hope, and they watched almost breathlessly. One more effort, a stronger one than the preceding, in which he drew himself up, and with fixed gaze, as if penetrating the darkness, he said, in a voice but little louder than a whisper:

"FATHER! into thy hands I commend my spirit;" and he died.

All was over now; his career on earth was finished. Nature mourned for him. She covered her glorious face with sackcloth of hair; her bosom heaved and throbbed convulsively; she rent her rocks, and even the vail of the Temple, in her anguish; for her LORD and Master was dead.

Sorrowfully, but lovingly, the disciples gathered around the dead JESUS. They were at liberty now to come near; for the spear which pierced his side gave evidence of his death. JOSEPH of Arimathea, a rich man, had obtained permission to bury him in his own new tomb.

No rough hand was laid on him now; no loud, harsh voices rasped upon the nerves; but tearfully, and with soft cloths, the women, who had lingered longest at the cross, wiped the blood and dust from that bruised brow and face. True; they were disappointed; but they loved still. And O. how tenderly did they perform this last ministry! With gentlest touch they bathed his torn hands and feet, and wrapped them with spices; clean linen was folded about his head and face; and when all was ready, his disciples carried him with solemn, mournful tread to the tomb, while the women and other friends followed closely.

There was no tolling bell nor muffled drum to beat a funeral dirge; no gilded hearse nor horses draped in black to bear him hence; no long array of carriages and mourners in stately procession; no eloquent eulogy pronounced over his corpse. O, no! but they bore him to his resting-place with as fond and tender hearts as ever beat; and there they left him — asleep!

CHAPTER XVIII.

O, empty tomb! so dear to me;
Where is thy sacred, heavenly Prize?
Ah! crucified with CHRIST to-day;
I in his likeness shall arise.

—*W. Kellaway.*

THE last sacrifice of the Passover had now been offered; the feast had been partaken of, and the Sabbath was past. Early on the morrow, the thousands of visiting pilgrims were to start for their homes; and not a few of that great multitude carried with them heavy, heavy hearts. When they came, hope was high and expectation large; but with the One now dead whom they thought was heir to DAVID's throne, all hope of kingly glory was buried. This was especially true of the Apostles, who had expected to sit with him on his throne; but instead of that kingly glory, they were covered with shame.

Still bound together by bonds of mutual sympathy and sorrow, they endeavored to keep apart from the thoughtless, giddy throng. For over three years they had followed JESUS; they had shared his loneliness, privations and sorrows; at his bidding, they had preached the gospel and healed the sick; but now they must go back and take up life as they had dropped it, when they left all to follow him: PETER and ANDREW, JAMES and

JOHN, to their boats and fish-nets; MATTHEW to his tax-gathering; and the rest to their former occupations. They, with hundreds of others, would be better and happier for his sojourn among them; they had been taught how to become good and true, and though he might be dead, yet his words would live on in their hearts.

Of course, they would have many scoffs to bear and much harsh criticism — they expected this — for his sake; but if it had not been for him, many a home would have been desolate and many a chair vacant; so it was not total darkness, after all.

To the women who followed him, the disappointment was not so great; because they had not expected so much — that is, they loved and adored him for what he was and for what he had been to them, more than for what they expected him to be. They could not forget the many blind eyes and deaf ears he had opened; the sick and suffering he had cured; the broken hearts he had healed; the sunshine he had let into homes of wretchedness; so, while some mourned over promised but unrealized glory, they loved for past blessings and mercies.

And somehow they could not leave the city, with its tomb and precious dead, without going once more to bind around JESUS a few more spices, and anoint and perfume his body anew. As the caravan with which they were to travel would depart very early for their homes in Upper Galilee, they arose from their couches just at daybreak, and hastened to the sepulchre. Not knowing that a guard had been placed around the tomb; nor that

the Roman seal had been affixed to the stone, that had been rolled up to its mouth — which to break would cost them their lives — they questioned as they went, who should roll it away.

As they came round the base of the hill, they saw that the cave was already open, and the stone lying at some distance from the mouth. It had been some comfort to know just where they had laid the Master; but they were now robbed of this poor solace; for undoubtedly some one had come and taken him away.

“Stay thou here and watch, while I run and tell PETER;” said MARY, of Magdala; and without waiting for an answer, she turned and hasted into the city. Almost breathless, and with voice full of emotion, she hurriedly exclaimed, as she met the forlorn disciple: “They have taken away the LORD out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.”

PETER and JOHN were almost inseparable now; and this morning they were together as usual. The other disciples, although as faithless as PETER, had not openly denied their Master as he; therefore remorse was not added to their cup of disappointment, as it was to his. Such natures are usually on the mountain-top, or else low in the valley; and when they are unable to lead, they must be carried: so it was with him. PETER needed the soothing love and sympathy of this young disciple, so like the Master, to comfort his despondent heart, and keep his rash spirit within bounds; but when they heard this startling news, they both ran, with all speed, to the tomb.

Meanwhile the women whom MARY had left there, had cautiously approached the sepulchre, and stooping down, had timidly looked in. Instantly they drew back, and would have fled away, in their terror, had not a voice, full of gentleness, said:

“Fear not! Be not affrighted!”

Reassured by the voice, they turned back, and there they saw a young man, sitting on the right hand of the shelf where they had deposited the body of JESUS. Clothed completely in white, with flowing hair, complexion as fair and rosy as morning's dawn, face cast in a perfect mould and shining with heavenly sweetness, eyes aglow with tender sympathy, he looked unlike any man they had ever seen. This was Heaven's messenger—an Angel; and as they looked upon him in astonishment, he continued to speak:

“I know that ye seek JESUS, of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is not here; he is risen. Come; see the place where the LORD lay. Do you not remember how he spake unto you while he was yet with you in Galilee; saying: ‘The SON OF MAN must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again?’ Go quickly, and tell his disciples, and PETER, that he is risen from the dead; and, behold! he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.”

Amazed, and filled with joy, they hastened on their bidden way. Their hearts were so light, it seemed their feet hardly touched the earth, as they sped back into the city.

MARY of Magdala had again gone to the tomb, but by another way; so she did not meet the women as they returned. When she reached the place where her LORD was buried, and saw it empty, her grief broke out afresh, and leaning against the stone which had been rolled back, she covered her face and wept.

"Woman! why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?" said some one at her side.

Supposing it was the gardener she saw through the mist of tears, she said, pleadingly:

"O, Sir! if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away."

Eyes half blinded with tears and head bowed with grief, she knew not the Stranger who stood beside her, and for a moment—a tiny moment—he let her pour out her sorrow; then he spoke again, just one word, and that her name—

"MARY!"

Quick as thought's instantaneous flash she recognized the voice—no one but JESUS ever spoke her name like that. Raising her head in the same moment, before her stood her LORD—the very same JESUS; just as she had seen him when he last left Galilee, save that his face bore no signs of weariness nor suffering now; but a heavenly smile lit up his countenance, and kindled his mild blue eyes. With one bound, she threw herself at his feet, to embrace them, with the word "Master!" upon her lips.

He knew her clinging heart would have him ever stay upon this earth, and bid him go and come as

was his wont before his death; but he knew also that he must soon leave them all, and ascend to his FATHER; so he withdrew a little from her, when she cast herself before him, as if saying: "Do not hold me; MARY! Think not that I am come to stay; for I am soon to ascend to my FATHER, and to your FATHER; therefore, teach your heart to love and worship me in a more spiritual way; and go, tell my disciples, that I ascend to my God, and to your GOD."

"I have seen the LORD! I have seen the LORD!" she exclaimed, as she burst in upon the mourning disciples, a little later.

"Thou hast seen a vision;" said THOMAS. Surely the LORD is not alive; for who would raise him? Since the world began, one was never known to rise from the dead without the power of another."

"But could not GOD send his Angel to perform this mighty work?" interposed JOHN, the beloved.

"Truly, he might; but if JESUS is alive, why doth he not manifest himself to us?" he said, gloomily.

"He goeth into Galilee, and there he will meet all his disciples;" said JOANNA, who had also seen JESUS, and worshipped him. "Come! let us go at once."

"It seemeth like a lovely song that thou dost sing to us;" said PHILIP, smiling sadly upon the buoyant face of the last speaker.

"Ah, PHILIP! be not faithless; but believing," she said, with a touch of disappointment in her voice.

"When I see, I will believe;" he replied.

"Then come where the LORD hath promised to meet thee;" she said, earnestly.

"Not now; but when I have established my business in Jerusalem, I will return to Galilee for a season;" he positively asserted.

"How did the Master look?" inquired JAMES.

"O, he was just the same JESUS!" responded MARY, quickly. "The nail-prints were still in his hands and feet, and the wounds upon his brow; but there was no blood oozing from them, as when we saw him upon the cross. His face was like the morning; calm and serene as ever; but aglow with light and triumph. His voice — O, it was by that I knew him! It was just as soft and feeling as when he first spoke to me, and as authoritative as the day he bade the devils depart."

"And PETER!" said the mother of JAMES, eager to communicate to the disciple sad with a double sadness some ray of cheer; "the Angel would have us not forget to tell thee, above all others, that the LORD was risen, and would meet thee in Galilee."

"Dost thou hear that, PETER?" said JOHN, more ready to believe than the rest; "the Master doth not disown thee."

PETER dropped his head in sorrow. Since that unhappy night in which he denied his LORD, he had had fewer words than before; and now he makes no reply.

"Hast thou heard the news?" exclaimed LAZARUS, with an unwonted light upon his countenance, as he came in abruptly upon the disciples, at this moment.

"What news?" they inquired.

"Why! that the LORD is risen from the dead;" he answered.

"It is an idle tale;" said THOMAS.

"Nay, verily;" said LAZARUS, with enthusiasm.

"I was at the Temple early this morning, when the Roman guard, that had been left to watch, came running past. One of the priests, seeing them in such a hurry, cried out to them.

"Hold! what causeth this unusual haste?" he said.

The men stopped, and we saw they were in great terror.

"JESUS, of Nazareth, whom we crucified three days ago, at your word, is risen from the dead;" said they.

"You were asleep and dreaming;" sarcastically replied the priest.

"Not so;" indignantly responded one of the guard; "we were on our watch, attending to our duty, when, just before the day broke, the earth began to tremble, and suddenly one like the gods came from heaven, with the sound of a rushing wind, and stood at the door of the cave. His countenance was like the lightning, so that we hardly dared behold him. All our strength left us, and we became paralyzed, and were as dead men, save that we saw and heard. With scarcely an effort he pushed aside the stone, which was very great, and went into the sepulchre. The cave immediately became light, with such a light as neither the sun nor moon can give — a sort of dazzling whiteness — and in a moment, JESUS, the one who was dead, came forth out of the tomb. We

saw him; and knew by the prints of the nails in his hands and feet that it was he; but we instantly became unconscious, from fear. I do not know how long we lay there; but coming to our senses, we started from the place, and are now on our way to tell PILATE.'

"Thus did they tell the story; and I believe that JESUS is indeed risen, and will soon appear to some of his disciples;" he concluded, in joyful tone.

"It is true! it is true! for he hath appeared unto me, and hath talked with me;" cried MARY; "let us praise his name together."

LAZARUS looked at her with surprise, as, with many rapturous exclamations, she narrated to him how she had seen the LORD.

"He is truly the SON OF GOD;" declared LAZARUS, without hesitancy or shadow of doubt; "and hope is begotten again in my heart."

But still the disciples believed not.

CHAPTER XIX.

O, come! yes, come! we press thee, LORD!
Would that thy coming were to-day!
Meetened by grace to dwell with thee,
We weary of thy long delay.

—*W. Kellaway.*

ON the afternoon of the same day as that on which JESUS arose from the dead, two of his disciples, one of whom was CLEOPAS, were on their way from Jerusalem to Emmaus. They were sad and confused over what had happened to their Master—it was so different from their anticipations. They had heard the news of the resurrection of the LORD; but it gave them no comfort, because they doubted its truthfulness. And they were also staggered in their faith as to whether JESUS was indeed the Messiah. So, as they walked in company, they conversed on what was uppermost in their minds; and reasoned concerning the reported resurrection.

A Stranger was ahead of them; and walking more briskly than he, they soon overtook him. The usual salutations of peace were exchanged, and the Stranger showed an inclination to journey with them. Having caught snatches of their earnest conversation while they were approaching him, and observing the dejection on their countenances, he was curious to inquire of the same.

1917
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Stories from Life of The Wonderful. 211

“What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk and are sad?” said he, with a searching look into their faces.

“Why! thou must be a Stranger in Jerusalem, if thou hast not heard of the things that are come to pass in these days;” said CLEOPAS.

“What things?” inquired the Man.

“Concerning JESUS, of Nazareth; who was a man mighty in deed and word, before GOD and the people: indeed, we believed him to be the promised MESSIAH, the very SON OF GOD, and the one who should redeem Israel. But the chief priests and rulers condemned him to death, and crucified him; and this is the third day since these things were done. But”—continued CLEOPAS, changing the inflexion of his voice to a higher key—“certain women who were early at the sepulchre this morning, said they saw a vision of angels; but the LORD was not there.”

“Sirs!” said the Stranger; “how slow are ye to understand the Prophets! According to the Scriptures, ought not CHRIST to have suffered, and afterwards to enter into glory? And did not JESUS say unto thee, that he must be crucified; but that he would rise from the dead on the third day? Then he expounded to them the prophecies relating to the CHRIST.

What a revelation it was to them! And how their hearts burned within them! Now they could believe the women’s story. But who was this Stranger? And how came he to have such a remarkable insight into the Scriptures?

“Abide with us, for the day is far spent;” said the two disciples, as they reached the house where they were to spend the night; while he, apparently, was still to continue his journey.

Pressed to accept their invitation he went in, and as they were about to partake of the evening meal, he took up the bread to give thanks; and while he sat there, with closed eyes and uplifted hands, they recognized in him the familiar features and voice of their beloved Master, who so often had blessed their humble meal, as they journeyed with him from place to place.

Exclamations of joy and wonder sprang to their lips as they bowed before him; but JESUS, with a smile so heavenly, and full of tender love, regarded them for a moment, and then withdrew. They followed him to the door, to entreat him to tarry longer with them; but he was gone, and they could find no trace of him.

Such news was too good to keep; and, though they had not intended to return to Jerusalem until the next day, they now hastened back with all speed. They found the disciples gathered together, and PETER telling them how he had seen the LORD. His face was really shining with delight — a new delight, such as he had never known before. His old, rash enthusiasm had gone; likewise his despondency, born of denial of his Master; and in their place had come this quiet heavenly rapture. When PETER had finished, the two disciples told their story — how they had met the LORD in the way, his discourse to them, and their recognition of him as they were about to sup together.

With those who had seen the risen CHRIST joy knew no bounds; the rest were dumb with wonder. There was so much to talk about; so they communed far into the night; when lo! JESUS himself came, and stood in their midst!

They did not see him enter, nor had they heard his footsteps; but there he was, in the centre of the assembly! And this sudden and mysterious appearance startled them, and forbade his instant recognition. His "Peace be unto you!" had hardly quelled their fears; so he said:

"Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet!" and he stretched them forth, that they might see and handle.

Ah, yes; it was JESUS, truly! It was he, beyond question! But in their joy and amazement, they were unable to express themselves. They knew not how to approach him: old-time familiarity seemed out of keeping with his present majesty and power. Beside, they were so ashamed of their lack of faith, and hence hesitated to be too bold.

"Have ye any meat?" he asked; so they brought a piece of broiled fish and an honeycomb. And there, sitting in their midst, he brake off little bits and ate.

But THOMAS was not with them; so when they told him how JESUS had appeared, he shook his head sceptically.

"Except I see in his hands the prints of the nails, and thrust my hand into the wound in his side, I will not believe;" he said.

A week had now passed away, and the disciples were again assembled in a secret place, for fear of the Jews. THOMAS was with them this time; and so was JESUS. He had come as he did before, quietly and suddenly; and after a moment's pause, he turned to his doubting disciple.

"THOMAS!" he said; "reach hither thy finger and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing."

And such a kindly imploring look was on his face as he spoke and held out his hands—a look that said as plainly as words: "THOMAS! thou art mine; I cannot lose thee from my fold. See! I am the very same JESUS that was crucified, and that thou usest to love; now let your faith return and your joy be full."

It was enough; the condescension of the Master was beyond his expectation.

"My LORD and my GOD!" he exclaimed, falling at his feet, in an attitude of worship.

"Because thou hast seen, thou hast believed;" said JESUS; "blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed." And that blessing, reader, is thine, if thou hast learned to love and trust the Invisible.

Many days passed since the disciples last saw their LORD; when we see them together again it is in Galilee. The morning was dawning, and far out on a wave of the sea was a little boat. It was coming to land; and in it were seven of JESUS' disciples. All night they had toiled and caught nothing; but that is not unusual for fishermen,

although trying to their patience. They saw some one standing on the shore, and without much reasoning, they thought it was ZEBEDEE, the father of JAMES and JOHN.

"Children have ye any meat?" was sent ringing over the waves.

"No!" came back for answer.

"Cast the net, then, on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find;" was next shouted. They did as commanded, and were not able to draw in for the multitude of fishes.

"It is the LORD!" whispered JOHN the beloved, to PETER; doubtless remembering the miraculous draught of fishes at the command of JESUS over three years before, when they left their nets and boats to follow him. It was on this same Lake, too; and then, as now, they had toiled all night and had taken nothing.

It was so like the Master, to gratify their earthly desires, as far as was good for them. PETER knew it; and not minding fish, nor boat nor friends, he threw himself into the water, and swam ashore to JESUS.

O, JESUS! this last act seems to us the crowning one of all! In thy resurrection-power thou art the same as in thy humility — exaltation doth not change thee; thou knowest where thy disciples are toiling, weary, cold and hungry; and there thou art with thy blessing! And for ever, to-day as yesterday, thou carest for thine own!

On the sand was a little fire of coals, prepared by JESUS' own hands, and fishes were laid thereon to broil.

"Come and dine;" he said, invitingly; and as the disciples, chilled and wet, gathered around that fire in the early dawn, JESUS served each of them with a piece of fish and bread. Could anything be sweeter? he cooked it himself, and handed it to them at their wish!

"SIMON, son of JONAS! lovest thou me?" he said to PETER, looking at him earnestly.

"Thou knowest that I love thee;" responded the subdued, but still ardent, disciple.

Three times was the question put; as if in gentlest manner to recall the three denials, and to get from him three avowals of his revived faith and love. So tenderly does the LORD reprove his chosen ones; meanwhile blessing them with his love, and serving them with good things.

Forty days had come and gone since the resurrection of JESUS; in which time he had appeared to them frequently, and instructed them concerning the work left for them to finish.

By especial appointment, he had now met them on Mount Olivet, near Bethany. He had talked with them long and earnestly, until their hearts were thrilled, and they longed to go out and publish the glad tidings.

Signs should follow their ministry, he said; and that even greater things than he had done should they do. They must baptize all believers in the name of the FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY GHOST. And as he gave it, baptism was a beautiful symbol of his death, burial and resurrection; and in this ordinance believers showed their faith in him.

He bade them go into all the world, preaching his gospel; but charged them to begin at Jerusalem first. He had sent them forth once without staves, coats or money, and they had lacked nothing; so now he commanded them to go, trusting him. They must not even count their lives dear to them; and in hours of trial, he would teach them what to say.

"Before you go," he said; "tarry ye in Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high: for the HOLY GHOST shall come upon you. Then shall ye be witnesses unto me in all Judea, and in Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth; and lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Rising, as if about to go from them, he lifted up his hands in blessing; and as he blessed them, he began to ascend. Up, up, he went! his words becoming fainter and fainter; and while his disciples looked earnestly and wonderingly upon him, a bright cloud received him out of their sight! HE WAS GONE! He whom ISAIAH had named "THE WONDERFUL"—whose birth, death and resurrection were marvels—whose every act in life was an exhibition of God's miraculous power: he whom angels adored and devils acknowledged—whom his betrayer declared "innocent"—whom his judge pronounced "faultless:" he, even he, in whose being divinity and humanity were mysteriously combined—who was the Son of man, and the SON OF GOD—had now ascended to heaven, to sit at the right hand of the FATHER, who had sent him to earth for our salvation.

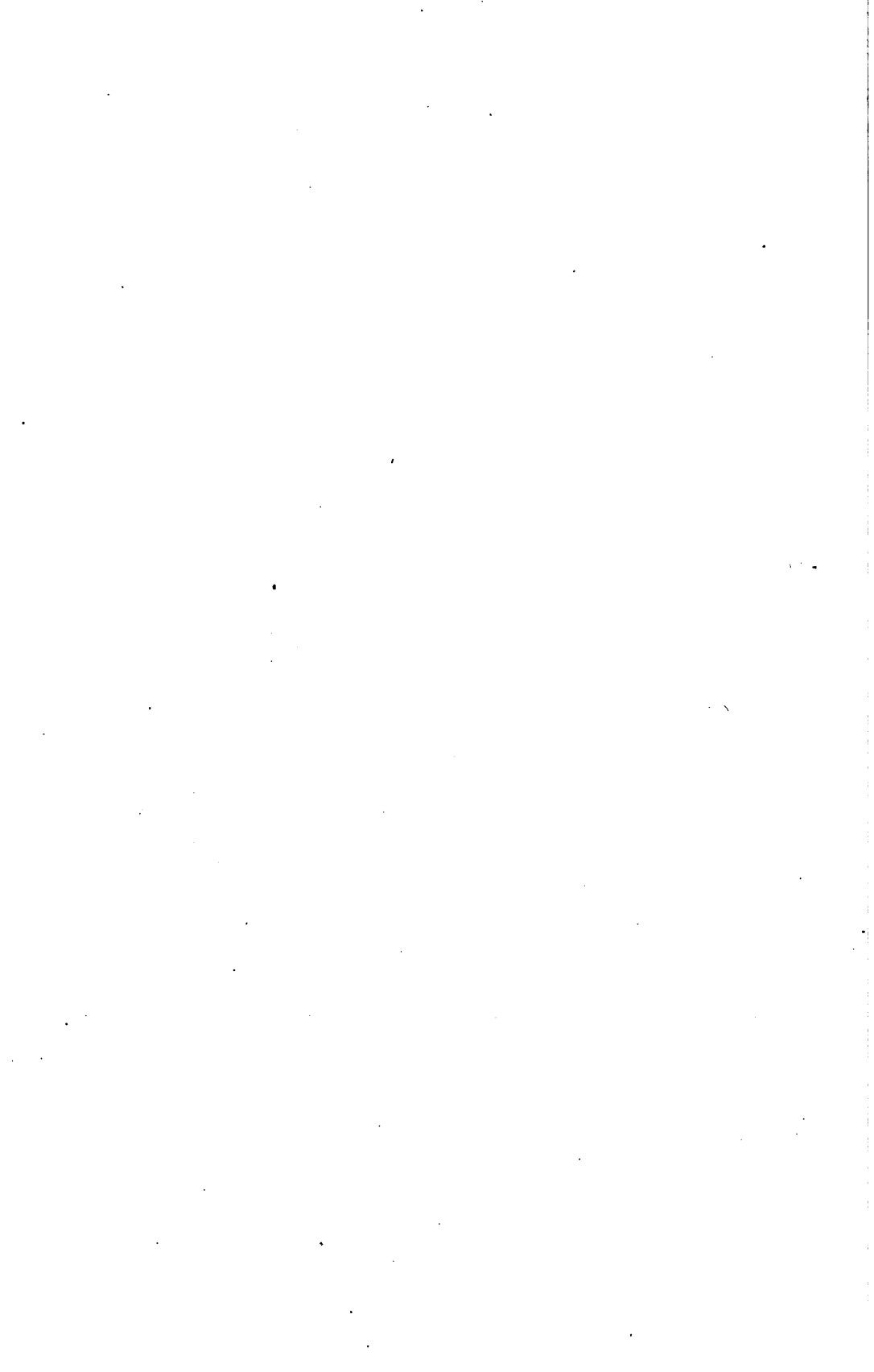
Filled with awe, the disciples gazed silently and steadfastly into the heavens, even after the bright cloud had melted away; when, suddenly, two angels stood by them, who said:

“Ye Men of Galilee! why stand ye gazing up into the heavens? this same JESUS, which is taken from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner, as ye have seen him go into heaven.”

The angels departed; and the disciples returned to Jerusalem, there to await the promised power from on high. It came; and they watched for their LORD'S return as they performed their labor.

Sixty years, or more, had passed away, and the beloved disciple, JOHN, is on the lonely Isle of Patmos. He had been banished there for JESUS' sake. An Angel is sent by his Master to say to him: “Surely, I come quickly;” to which he responded with all the longing of a faithful and loving disciple:

“EVEN SO; COME, LORD JESUS!”



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